Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
The droughte of marche hath perced to the roote
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour
Whan zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Enspirid hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes and the yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halfe cours y ronne
And smale foules maken melodye
That slepen al the night with open eye
So priketh hem nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
And palmeres for to seken straunge londes
To ferne halwes couthe in sondry londes
And specially fro every shires ende
Of engelond to Canterbury they wende
The holy blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seke
Bifel that in that seson on a day
In Southwerk at the tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Canterbury with ful deuout corage
That nyght was come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne & twenty in a compaynye
Of sondry folk by aventure y falle
In felaweshipe and pilgrymes were they alle
That toward Canterbury wolden ryde
The chambres and the stables weren wyde
And wel we weren eyght at ese atte beste

That I was of the felaschip anoon
And wente forthwith with goode entente
To take our way there as I yow devyse
But nathèles Whiles that I have tyme & space
Or that I forthir in this tale pace
Me thynketh that it Were accordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And Whiche they Were and of What degre
And in What array eke they Were ymet
And at a knyghte I Wil begynne
A knyght ther Was a Worthy man
That fro the tyme he first began
To ryden out he loved chyvalrye
Trouthe and honour fredom and curteisye
Ful Worthy he Was in his lordis Werre
And therto hadde he ryden noman ferre
As Wel in cristendom as in hethenesse
And ever honoured for his Worthynesse
At alisaundre he Was Whan it Was Wonne
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the boord begonne
Aboven alle nacions in prusse
In lettowe hadde he reysed and in ruse
No cristen man so ofte of his degree
In grenade at the seege eke hadde he be
In algezir and riden hadde he
In belmarie
At lyeys Was he and eke at satalye

Whanne they were Wome and in the yates set
At many at nobil armyse harose he he
At mortal batailles hadi he be fiftene
Andi fought for oure feith at Tramyssene
In lystis thries andi hath slayn his foo
This ilke Worthy knyghte hadde he also
Son tyme With the lordi of Palathie
Agayn another hethen man in Turkye
Andi euermore he hadde a souerayn price
Andi though he Was Worthy he Was Wise
Andi of his port as meke as a mayde
He neuer yet Vilayns Worde sayde
In al his lif to nomaner Wighte
He Was a gentil parfighte knyghte
Forto telle you of his aray
His hors Were gode but he Was not gay
Of sustian he Were a gipoun
All be smerdi With his habergeon
For he Was late come fro his viage
Andi Went forth to his pilgremage
With hym ther Was a semely yonge squyer
A louer andi a lusti bacheler
With lockis crulle as they Were leyd in presse
Of twenty yer of age he Was I gesse
Of his stature he Was of euene lenghte
Andi Wonderly deliuer & greet of strenghte
Andi he hadi be son tyme in chyualrye
In Flaundris in Artoise andi in Picardye
Andi born hym Wel as of a litel space

In hope to stonden in his ladies grace
Embrouded was he as it were a mede
Al ful of freshe flowris white and rede
Singinge he was or floytinge al day
He was as fresh as is the moneth of may
Short was his gowne with sleeves longe and wyde
Wel couthe he sitte on hors and therto faire ryde
He couthe songe make and wel endyte
Juste and daunce portreye and eke wryte
So hote he louede that he nyghtertale
He slepte nomore than a nyghtyngale
Curteys he was lowly and seruisabyl
He carf beforn his fader at the tabyl
Yemany hadde he and seruauntis nomo
At that tyme for he list to ryde so
And he was cledy in cote and hoode of grene
A sheef of arwes bright and shene
Under his belt he baar ful thriftely
Wel coude he dresse his takyl yomanly
His arwis droupede not with fetheris lowe
And in his hondy he baar a mighty bowe
A not hedy he hadde with a brouny visage
Of wodemannes craft coude he al the vsage
Vpon his arme he bare a gay bracer
And by his side a swerdy and a bokeler
And on that other side a gay daggere
Harneysedy wel and sharp as poynt of spere
A Cristofir on his brest ful shene
An horn he baar a baldryk grene

A fostrer Was he soothly as I gesse
Ther Was also a nonne a prioresse
That of hir smylynge Was simpil & coy
Hir greteste oth Was be seynt loy
And she Was clepid dame Eglentyn
Ful Wel she songe seruise diuine
Entoyned in hir Nose ful semely
And frenssh she spake ful fetously
After the scole of stratforde at the bowe
For frenssh of Paris Was to hir vnknowe
At mete Wel taught Was she With al
She lete no morsel fro hir lippis fal
Ne Wette hire fingres in hir sauce depe
Wel coude she carry a morsel of mete
That no drope fil on hir breste
In curtesie Was set ful mykil hir leste
Hir ouerlippe Wiped she so clene
That in hir cup ther Was no ferthyng sene
Of grece Whan she hadde dronke hir draught
Ful semely after hir mete she raught
And sikirly she Was of greet disport
Of plesaunce and amyable of port
And peyned hire to counterfete chiere
Of court to be statly of manere
And to be holde digne of reuerence
But for to speke of hir conscience
She Was so charitable and so pitous
She Wolde Weps and she sawe a mous
Kaught in a trappe if it Were deed or bledde

Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde
With rost flesh mylke and wastel breed
But sore wepte she if ony of hem were ded
Or if men smoot hem with a yerd smert
And al was conscience and tendre herte
Ful semely hir wympil pynched was
Her nose tretise hire yen gray as glas
Her mouth smal and therto softe and reed
But sikirly she hadde a fair forheed
It was almost a spanne brode I trowe
For hardily she was not undergrowe
Ful fetice was her cloke as I was war
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she baar
A peyre of bedes gauded al with grene
And there on hong a broche ful shene
On whiche that first was writte a crowned A
And after that amor vincit omnia
Another Nonne with hir ther was
Ful fair of hewe and bright of face
That was her chapeleyn and prestis three
A monk ther was fair for the maistre
Whiche afore that tyme hadde be
An out ryder he louede venerie
A manly man to be an abbot able
Ful many a deynte hors hadde he in stabil
And whan he rood men myghte his bridil here
Gyngelynge a whistelinge in the wynd cleer
And eke as lowde as doth the chapel belle
Ther as the lord was keper of the celle

The reule of saint Maure & of saint Benet
Be cause he held it somwhat streyt
This ilke monk lete olde thinges passe
And held after the newe worlde the space
He yaf not of the text a pulled hen
That seith that hunters ben not holy men
Ne that a monk whenne that he is recheles
Is lik to a fish wheyn it is waterles
This is to say a monk oute of a cloistre
But that texte held I not worth an oistre
And I say that his opinion was good
What shulde he studye and make hym wood
Up on a book alwey in cloistre to poure
Or swynke with hondis and laboure
As austyn bit. but how shal the worlde be serued
Let austyn have his swynk to hym reserued
Therfore he was a pricasour a right
Grehoundis he hadde as swift as fowel in flight
Of prykynge and of huntynge for the hare
Was al his lust for no thing wold he spare
I saw his sleuys purfiled at the hond
With grise and that the fyneste of a lond
And for to fastyn his hood vnder the chynne
He hadde of golde wrought a curious pynne
A loue knotte in the gretter ende there was
His heed was balled as eny stoon it nas
And eke his face as he hadde been anoynt
He was a lord ful fat and in good point
His yen stepe and rollynge in his heed
That stemed as a furneys of leed
His bootis souple his hors in gret estate

Moſt certenly he was a ſein prelate
He was not pale as a forpyned goſt
A fat ſwan loued he beſt of ony roſt
His palfrey was as broun as a bery
[illegible] Frere ther was aduanced a mery
[illegible] A lymytour and a ful ſolemne man
In alle the ordris four is non that so wel can
So moche of daliaunce and fair langage
He hadde made meny a fair mariage
Of ponge wommen at his owen coſt
Vntil his ordre he was a noble poſt
Ful wel beloued and ful familier was he
With frankeleyns ouer al in his contre
And with worthy yemen of the toun
For he hadde power of confeſſion
As ſayde hym ſelf more than a curat
And of his ordre he was licenciat
Ful ſweetely herde he confeſſion
And plaſaunt was his abſolucion
He was an esi man to yeue penaunce
Ther he wiſte to haue good pitaunce
For vnto a poure ordre for to yeue
Is ſygne that a man is wel yſhryue
For if he yaf he durſte make auaunt
He wiſte that a man was repentaunt
For many a man ſo hard is of herte
He may not wepe though he ſore ſmerte
Therfore in ſtede of weepynge and prayers
Men moſte yeue ſiluer to the poure freris

His tipet was ffossid ful of knyues
And with pynnys to yeue faire wyues
And certeyn he hadde a mery note
Merily coude he synge and pleye at the rote
Of tidyngis he bar bitterly the pryce
Milk whit he was as the flour delyce
Therto strong he was as a champioun
And knew the tauernys wel in euery toun
And euery osteler and tapstere
Better than a lazer or a beggestere
Forto vnto suche a man as he
Acordith not as by his facultee
To haue of suche sike lazers acqueyntaunce
It is not honest it may not auaunce
Forto dele with suche poraille
But with riche and selleres of vitaille
And ouer al there as richesse sholde aryse
Curteis he was and lowly of seruise
Ther was no man nowhere so vertuous
He was the beste beggere in his hous
For though a widowe hadde not a shoo
So plesaunt was his in principio
Yet wolde he haue a ferthing or he went
His purchace was better than his rent
And rathe he couthe as it were a whelpe
In louedayes there coude he mykyl helpe
For there he nas lik a cloisterer
With a threedbare cope as a pore frere
But he was like a maister or a pope

Of dubbyl worstede was his semy cope
That rounde was as a belle out of presse
Somwhat he lispyde for his wantownesse
To make his englisch sweete vp on his tunge
And in his harpynge whan he hadde I sunge
His yen twynklyde in his hed a right
As doon the sterris in the frosty nyght
This worthy freere was callyde hubberde
A marchaunt ther was with a forkide berde
In motley on high on his hors he sat
Vp on his hed a flaundres beuer hat
His bootis claspid feire and fetously
His resons he spak ful solempnely
Sowynge alwey the encrece of his wynnynge
He wolde the see were kept for any thynge
Betwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle
Wel coude he in his eschaunges selle
This worthy man his witte ful wel besette
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette
So estatly was he of gouernaunce
With his bargaynes and with his cheuesaunce
For sothe he was a worthy man with alle
But sothe to say I not how men hym calle
A clerk ther was of Oxenforde also
That vnto logyk hadde longe I go
As lene was his hors as a rake
And he was not right fat I vndertake
But lokyde holow and therto sobirly
Ful threedbare was his ouereste courtepy

For he hadde gote hym yet no benefice
Ne was not worldly to haue ony office
For hym was leuyr to haue at his beddis hed
Twenty bokys clad in blak and red
Of Aristotle and of philosophie
Than haue rych robis or fithil or sautrie
But al be that he was a philosophre
Yet hadde he but litil gold in cofre
But al that he myght of his frendis haue help
On bokis and on lernynge he it spent
And besely gaf for the soulis praye
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scolaye
Of study took he most cure and hede
Not o word spak he more than nede
Short and quyk and bright of sentence
Sothfastnes moral vertu was his prudence
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche
And ther with ful softe was his speche
A Sergeante of lawe war and wise
Was there that ofte hadde he at the paryse
That was also riche of excellence
Discrete he was and of gret reuerence
He semyd suche his wordis were so wise
Justice he was ful ofte in assise
By patent and by pleyn commissioun
For his science and his high renoun
Of fees and robis hadde he many on
So gret a purchasour was ther nowher non
Al was fee symple to hym in effect

His purchace mighte not be so hym suspect
Nowhere so besy amay as he ther Was
Andy yet he semyde besier thay he Was
In termes hadde he cases & domes alle
That fro the tyme of kyng William Were falle
Therto he couds endite and make a thing
Ther coude no Wight pynche at his Writing
Andy euery statut coude he pleyn by rote
He rode but homely in a medle cote
Gird With a seynt of silk With barres smale
Of his aray telle I no lenger tale
A Frankeleyn Was in his compaynye
White Was his berdy as the deysie
Andy of his complexiony Was sanguyn
Wel louedy he be the morowe a cup fyll
To kyue in delite Was euer his Wone
For he Was Epicurius owen sone
That heldy opynion that pleyn delite
Was verray felicite parfite
An housholder andy that a grat Was he
Saynt Julian he Was in his contre
His breedy his ale Was alWey after one
A better vynedy may Was nowher none
Withoute bake mete Was he neuer in his hous
His fissh his flessh andy that so plentuous
It chelde in his hous of mete andy drynke
Of alle deyntees that men couthe thynke
After the sundry sesons of the yere
So chaungedy he his mete andy his soper

Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe
And many a breme and lusce in stewe
Wo was his cook but his sauce were
Poynant and sharp and redy al his geer
His table dormant in his halle alway
Was redy couered al the longe day
At sessions ther was he lord and sire
Ful often tyme he was knyght of the shire
A lace and a gipser of silk
Hyng at his girdul as white as mowlk mylk
A sheeue hadde he be and a cowmour
Was nowhere suche a worthy vauesour
An habirdasshere ther was and a carpenter
A webbe a dyer and a tapiser
And they were clothed alle in o lyuere
Of a solempne and a greet fraternite
Ful freessh and newe her geer piked was
Here knyues chapid were not with bras
But al with siluer wrought ful clene & wel
Here girdelis and here pouchis euerydel
Wel semed eche of hem a fair burgeis
To sitten in the yeldy halle at the deys
Enerich for the wisedom that he can
Was happely forto be an alderman
For catell hadde they ynow and rent
And here wyues wolde it wel assent
And elles certayn they were to blame
It is ful fair to be cally dy madame
And go to vigilies al before

And haue a mantel trially I hote
Took they hadde with hem for the nones
To boylle the chekens & the mary bones
And poldre marchaunt tart and galyngale
Wel knewe he a draughte of londoun ale
He coude wel sette hoyle and frye
Make mortrewes and wel bake a pye
But grete harm was it as it thoughte me
For on his chynne a Mormoyl hadde he
And blank Mangeremade he with the beste
A Shipman was ther that wonyd fer be west
For ought I woot he was of dertemouth
He wonyd vp a tolwney as he cowth
In a gowne fol dynge to the knee
Dagger and a lace hangynge hadd he
Aboute his necke vnder his arm adoun
The hote somer hadde made his hewe al broun
And certaynly he was a good felawe
Ful many a draughte wyn he hadde drawe
Fro burdeux ward whyle the chapman sleep
Of conscience took he no keep
If ful many a batayll in that londe
He faught and hadde the higher honde
But of his craft to reken wel his tyde
His stremys and his daungers hym be side
Ther was non suche from hul in to Cartage
For wyse he was though he were ful of corage
Hardy he was and waar to vndertake
With many a tempest his berd hath quake

He knew alle the hauenes that there were
Fro yngelondy in to the Capfenester
Andy euery cryke in brytayne andy in spayne
His large was alledy the Maudeleyne
Wyth vs there was a doctour of phisik
In the worlde was ther noy hym lik
To speke of phisik andy surgerye
For he was grounded in Astronomye
He kepte his patiente a greet deel
In hour he magik naturel
Wel couthe he of fortune the accidens
Of his ymage for his patient
He knew the cause of euery maladye
Were it of coldy hete moyst or drye
Andy where engendredy of what humour
He was a fery parfight practesour
The cause he knew andy of his harmy the rote
Anoy he yaf the sikman his bote
For redy alway he his apotecaryes
To sende hym druggys & his letelwaryes
For eche of them made other forto wynne
Her frendschip was not nelle to begynne
Ful wel knew he the olde Estulapius
Andy diascoridy andy ele Platearius
Olde ypocras, haly andy ele Galiene
Serapioy Rasis andy ele Auicenne
Auorroys damascene andy Constantyn
Bernardy Gatisdeny andy Gilbertyn
Of his diete mesurable was he

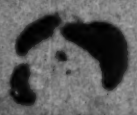
For it was of no superfluyte
But of gret norissinge and digestible
His study was but litil on the bybyll
In sanguyn and in pers I clad with alle
Lyned with taffata and with sandalle
And litil he was of his dispence
He kepte that he wan in the pestilence
For gold in phisik is a cordial
Therfore he loued gold in special

A good wif ther was of beside bathe
And she was somdel deef & þ was scathe
Of cloth makynge had she suche an haunt
She passid hem of ypre & of gaunt
In al the parisshe wif was ther non
That to the offrynge before hir sholde goon
And if ther did certayn wroth was she
Than was she oute of al charite
Her kerchefs ful fyn were of ground
I durste swere they weyed thre pound
That on a sunday were on hir hed
Hir hosyn were of fyne scarlet red
Ful streyte I teyed and shoos ful newe
Bold was her face fair & red of hewe
She was a worthy woman al hir lyue
Husbondis at the chirche dore had she fyue
Withoute other compayne in youthe
But therof nedith not to speke as nowthe
And thryes had she be at Jherusaleme
She had passid thilke many a straunge reme

At Rome she hadd be and at Babiloyne
At saint James in Galis and at Coloyne
She coude moche of wandrynge in the wey
Sap tothidy was she sothly to sey
Vp on an Ambeler sul esely she sat
Ywympliy wel ꝛ on hir hedy an hat
As broody as it were a bokeler or a targe
A foot mantil aboute hir hippis large
And on hir helis a prike of spores sharpe
In felefhip coude she lawhe and carpe
Of remedyes of loue she wiste ychawnce
For of that art she coude the dawnce
A Goody may this was of Religion
And was a pore parfon of a toun
But riche he was and holy of werk
He was also a lernedy may ꝛ a clerk
That cristis gospel lis treuly wolde preche
His parishons deuoutly wolde he teche
Benigne he was and wonder diligent
And in aduersite ful patient
And suche he was prouedy ofte sithes
Ful loth were he to curse for his tithis
But rather wolde he yeue out of doute
Vnto his pore parishons aboute
Of his offrynge and of his substenawnce
He coude in litel thingy haue sufficiawnce
Wide was his parish and housis fer a sondir
But he let not for rayn ne for thundir
In sikenesse ner in myschief to visite

The ferreſt in his pariſh more and lite
Vp on his feet and in his hondy a staf
This nobil ensample vnto his sherp he yaf
That first he vvoughte and aftervvardy taughte
Out of the gospelle the vvordis he caughte
And this figure he eldyd therto
That if goldy ruste vvhat sholde Iren do
For a preest to be foul in vvhom vve truste
No vvonder is a lovvdy man to ruste
And shame it is yf a preest take kepe
A slotty shepherde and a clene shepe
Vvel oughte a preest ensample to yeue
Be his clennesse how his shrevv sholde lyue
Be sette not his benefice to hire
And lete his shrevv acombre in the myre
And renne to londyn to saint Poulis
And seke hym a chauntrie for soulis
Other vvith a bretherhede to be vvithholde
But dvvelle at hoom and kepe his folde
So that the vvolf ne hadde the maistrye
He vvas a shepherde and not a mercenarye
And though he holy vvere and vertuous
He vvas nat to a sinful man to despitous
But in his speche discreet and benigne
He of his techyng daungerous ne digne
To drawe folk to heuen vvith fairnesse
Be good ensampyl this vvas his besinesse
But it vvere ony persone obstinat
Vvhether he vvere of high or lovve astat

Hym wolde he ſnybbe ſharply for the nonys
A better preeſt I trowe nowhere non is
He waited nat after no pompe ne reuerence
He ne made no ſpiced conſcience
But cristis lore and his apoſtelis twelue
He taughte but firſt he folowed hym ſelue
With him ther was a plowman was his brother
That had ledd of dunge many a fother
A trewe ſwynker and a good was he
Louynge in pees and parfit charite
God loued he beſt with al his herte
At alle tymes thogh he gamed or ſmerte
And than his neyghebour right as hym ſelf
He wolde threſſhe and therto digge and delf
For cristis ſake for euery poure wighte
Withoute hire if it lay in his myghte
His tithes payde he ful faire and wel
Of his propir ſwynk and his catel
In a tabard he rood vp on a mere
Ther was also a reue and eke a Millere
A ſompnour and a pardoner also
A Manciple and my ſelf ther was no mo
The millere was a ſtout carle for the nonys
Ful big he was of braun and bonys
That proued wel for ouer there he cam
At wraſtlynge alwey he wolde haue the ram
He was ſhort ſhuldred a thicke quarre
Ther was no dore that he nolde heue of the harre
Or breke it at a rennynge with his hed



His berde as onȳ ſolle or whȳ was reddȳ
And ȳherto broodȳ as it were a ſpade
Vpp on ȳe cop of his noſe he hade
A werte and ther ou ſtoodȳ a tufte of heris
Rede as ȳe heuſtelis of a ſolles eris
His noſtrellis blak were and wyde
A ſwerdȳ and a bokeler bar he be his ſyde
His mouth as greet as is a furneys
He was a Jangeler and a iolȳ hardȳs
And that was moſt of ſyme & harlotrȳes
Wel coude he ſtele corn and tolle thrȳes
And that he hadde a thombe of goldȳ parde
A whit cote and a blew hoodȳ werydȳ he
A bagge pype coude he blowe and ſowne
And ther with he broughte out of towne
A Gentyl Manciplȳ was ther of ȳe tempyl
Of whiche a catour mighte take enſampyl
Forto be wyſe in bȳinge of vitaȳl
For whether he payde or tooke by taȳl
Algate he waytydȳ ſo on his acate
That he was ay before and in goodȳ ſtate
Now is nat that of godȳ a fair grace
That ſuche a lewdȳ mannys witte ſhal pace
The wiſedom of an heep of lernedȳ men
Of maiſtris hadde he moo than thries ten
That were of lande expert and connȳng
Of whiche ther were a doſeȳ in that hous
Worthȳ to be ſtuardis of rente and londe
Of onȳ lordȳ that is in Engelondȳ

To make hym lyue be his owen goody
In honour dedes but he were woody
Other lyue scarsely as hym list desire
Andy sorto helpe al the shire
In ony cause that myghte falle or happe
Andy this mancipill set al her cappe

Reue ther was a sturdy colerik man
His berdy is shaue as nygh as he can
His heris were be his eris wundy shore
His top was dockidy lik a preste before
Ful longe were his leggis andy ful lene
Lik a staf ther nys no calf I sene
Wel coude he kepe a garner andy a bynne
Ther was noy auditour coude of hym wynne
Wel wiste he be the droughte andy be the rayn
The yeldynge of his seedy andy of his grayn
His lordis sheep his neet andy his dirie
His swyne his hors his stoor andy his pultrie
Was hoolly in this reuys gouernynge
Andy by his couenaunt yaf the reckenynge
Seth his lordy was twenty yeer of age
Ther coude noman brynge hym in arrage
Ther nas hauily ne nony other hyne
That coude his sleyghte or his couyne
They were of hym a drady as of the deth
His wonynge was faire vp on an heth
With grene trees shadowedy was his place
He coude better than his lordy purchace
Ful riche he was astoredy pryuely

His lordy he wolde please discretly
To yeue ayens to hym of his owen goody
And haue thank & yet aowe and ay hoody
In pongthe he hadde lernedy a goody mystere
He was a wel goody wrighte a Carpentere
This reue sat vpon a wel goody stot
That was al pomel gray and hyghte scot
A longy surcote of perse vp on hym he hadde
And by his syde he baar a rusty bladde
Of Norfolk was this reue of whiche I telle
Be syde a toun men calle Baldiswelle
Tuckyd he was as is a frere aboute
And euer he wody the hyndereste of the route
A Sompnour with vs was in that place
That hadde a redy cherubyn face
For salbsflemme he was with yen narow
Hoot he was and licherous as a sparuow
With blake brolles skalkid and pilledy berdy
Of his visage childeren were a ferdy
Ther nas quyksiluer litarge ne brimstone
Borace ceruse ne oyle of tartre none
Ne oynement that ichith or byte
That mighte helpe of his welkis white
Ne of his knobbis sittynge in his chekys
Welle louedy he onyons garleek and lekys
And forto drynke redy wyne as redy as blood
Than wolde he speke & crye as he were wood
And whan he hadde wel dronke the wyn
Than wolde he speke no wordy but latyn

A felwe termes hadde he two or thre
That he hadde lerned of sum man of degre
No wondir is he herde it al the day
And ek ye knowe wel that a Jay
Can clepe watte as wel as the pope
But who coude hym in oother thingis grope
Thanne had he spent al his philosofie
A questio quid queris wolde he crye
He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A better felowe sholde no man fynde
He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn
A good felowe to haue his concubyn
A twelf monthe & excuse hym at the fulle
Ful prively a finche ek coude he pulle
And yf he fond owher a good felawe
He wolde teche hym anoon to haue awe
In swiche cas of the archedekenes curs
But yf mannys soule were in his purs
For in his purs he sholde punysshed be
Purs is the archedekenes helle sayde he
But wel I woot he lieth in dede
Of curssynge oughte eche man him drede
For curssynge wil sle right as sowlyng sleeth
And also ware hym of sygnifiaunt
In daunger hadde he at his owen gise
Alle the yonge girlis of the diocyse
And knewe of hir counseil & was of her rede
A garlond he hadde set vp on his hede
As greet as it were an ale stake

A Somnour hadde he wyth hym of a Cake
With hym ther wode a gentil pardoner
Of vnneyuale his frendy & his compere
That streyght was come fro the pope of Rome
Ful lowde he sange com hider lene gowne
This sompnour bare to hym a stif burdon
Was neuer trompe of half so greet a soun
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex
And smothe it hyng as doth a strike of flex
By vnces hyng his lockis that he hadde
And therwith his sholdris ouer spradde
But thyn it lay be culpons one and one
Ne hood for colde wered he none
For it was trussed vp in his walet
Hym thoughte he wode vp in the nelde get
Dissheuyled saue his cappe he wode algate
Suche glarynge yen hadde he as hath a hare
His walet beforn hym had he in his lappe
A vernacle hadde he sowed vp on his cappe
Bretes ful of pardon com fro Rome al hoot
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot
No berd hadde he ne neuer sholde haue
As smothe was it as it were nelde shaue
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare
But of his craft from Berwik vnto Ware
Ne was ther nother suche a pardoner
For in his male he hadde a pilow beer
Which that he sayde was our ladies veyl
He sayde he hadde a gobet of the seyl

That ſaint Petir hadde When that he Went
Up on the ſe til Jeſus crist hym hent
He hadde a cros of latoun ful of stones
And in a glas he hadde piggis bones
But With thise reliques When that he fond
A poure person dwellynge up on lond
Up on a day he gat hym more mone
Than the person gat in monethis thre
And thus hath he feyned flaterie & Japis
He made the parson and the pepill his apis
But trewli to telle at the last
He Was in chirche an noble ecclesiast
Wel coude he rede a lesson or a story
But alderbest he song an offertory
For Wel he Wiste When that song Was sunge
He moste preche and wel his tunge
To Wynne siluer as he Wel can
Therfore he song the merier than
NOw haue I tolde you shortly in a clause
The state the aray the nombre & the cause
Why that assembled Was this companye
In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrye
That highte the Tabard fast by the belle
But nowe is tyme to you for to telle
How that We bare vs that ilke nyghe
When that We Were in the hostry alighe
And after Wil I telle of our viage
And al the remenaunt of our pilgremage
But first I you pray of your curtasye

That ye ne vetent nat my vilonye
Though that I playnly speke in this matere
To telle you here wordis and hir chere
And though I speke here wordis propirly
For this ye knowe as wel as I
Who shal a tale telle after a man
He moste reherce as neve as he can
Euery word yf it be in his charge
Al speke he so rudely and so large
Or elles he moste telle his tale vntrewe
Or feyn thyngis or feyne wordis newe
He may not spare al though he were his brothir
He moot as wel say o word as anothir
Crist spak hym self ful brode in holy writ
And wel ye woot no vilany is it
Eke plato saith who so can it rede
The word moste be cosyn to the dede
Also I pray you for geue it me
Al though I sette not folk in her degre
Here in thyse tales as they sholde stonde
My wit is short ye may wel vnderstonde
Host here made our ost to vs euerichon
And to soupe sette vs anon
He serued is with vitayle at the beste
Strong was the wyne & drynke vs liste
A semely man our host was with alle
For to be a marchal in a lordes halle
A large man he was with yen steepe
A fayrer burgeys is ther non in cheepe

Bolde of his speche and wel was I taught
And of manhood lacked he right nought
Eke therto was he right a mery man
And after soper to pleyn he began
And spak of myrthe amonge other thinges
Whan that we hadde made our rekenynges
He sayde thus now lordynges trewly
Ye be to me right welcome hertely
For be my trouthe yf I shal not ly
I saw not this yere so mery a compayne
At onys in this herbowh as now
Feyne wolde I do you myrthe yf I wiste how
And of my myrthe I am right now bethought
To do you ese and it shal coste you nought
Ye go to Caunterbury god you spede
The blisful martir quyte your mede
And wel ye woot as ye go be the weye
Ye shappyn you to talke and to pleye
For trewly comfort ne myrthe is non
To ride be the wey dom as a stoon
And therfore wil I make you disport
As I sayde erst and do you comfort
And if it liketh you alle be on assent
For to stonde at my iugement
And for to worke as I shal you say
To morwh whan ye ryden on the way
Now be my fader soule that is ded
But ye be mery I shal yeve you my hed
Holde up your hond withoute more speche

Our counsel shal not longe be to seche
Vs thoughte it was not worth to make vs wyse
And graunted hym without more avyse
And bad hym saye his verdit as hym list
Lordynges qd he now herkeneth for the best
But take it not I pray you in disdeyne
This is the poynt to speke it short & pleyne
That eche of you to shorte with your weye
In this viage shal telle talis tweye
To Cauntirburyward I mene it so
And homward he shal telle other talis two
Of auenturis that whilom have befalle
And whiche of you berith hym best of alle
That is to sey that telleth in this caas
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shal have a soper of our alther cost
Here in this place sittynge by this post
Whan that ye come ayen from Cauntirbury
And for to make you the more mery
I wil my self go with you and ryde
Right at myn owen cost and be your gyde
And who that wol my iugement withsay
Shortly shal paye all that is spent by the way
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so
Tel me anone without wordis moo
And I wil erely shape me therfore
This thyng was graunted & othis swore
With ful glad herte & prayen hym also
That he wolde vouchesauf to do so

And that he wolde be our gouernour
And of oure tales Juge and reportour
And sette a soper at a certayn pryce
And wold be rebuld at his deuyce
High and lowe and alle be on assent
We be accorded to the Jugement
And therto lyp on the wyne was fet anone
We dronk and to reste went be echone
Without eny lenger taryynge
Amorowe whan the day gan sprynge
Up roos our host and was al our cok
And gadred vs alle in a flok
And forth we rideh lityl more than a pas
Vnto the Watereynge of saint Thomas
And there oure hoste gan his hors areste
And sayde harkeneth lordingez yf ye liste
Ye woot our forward and I you recorde
Yf euensong and morowe song accorde
Let se now who shal telle the firste tale
As eyr moot I drynke wyne or ale
Who so wil be rebel to my iugement
Shal paye for al that is be the way spent
Now draw aut or that ye further ryde
Whiche shal the firste tale begynne
Sire knyght quod he my maister & my lord
Draweth aut for that is myn accord
Cometh hithir quod he my lady Prioresse
And ye sire clerk let be your shamefastnesse
Ne studyd not ley on hond eury man

Among to Rideralle euery knyght by lyne
And shortly to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture fortune or cas
The fates & this the ordenaunce
Of whiche pat lyketh to gouerne vs in oure daunce
And telle he moste as it was tho
Be forward and he compositio
As ye haue herd what nedeth wordis moo
And whan this good man sawe that it was so
As he that was wyse and obediet
To kepe his forward he his fre assent
He sayde sithnes I shal begynne the game
What welcom be aut a goddes name
Now lat vs ryde & herkyn what I say
And with that word we riden forth on the way
And he began with right a merry chere
And sayde anone his tale as ye shul here

Here begynneth the knyghtis tale.

Whilom as olde story telleth vs
Ther was a duke that highte Theseus
Of atheles he was lord and gouernour
And in his tyme suche a conquerour
That greter was ther none vnder sonne.
Ful many a riche contre had he wonne
That with his wisedom and chiualrye
He conquered al the regne of femenye
That whilom was clepedy Cithea
And wedded the quene Ipolita
And brought hir home in to his contre

Wyth moche glorie and̄ solempnite
And̄ eke hir yonge suster Emelye
And̄ thus with victorye and̄ melodye
Lete I this worthy duke to Athenes ryde
And̄ al his oost in armes hym besyde
And̄ certis if it nere to longe to here
I wolde have told fully the manere
How wonne was the regne of femenye
By Theseus and̄ by his chivalrye
And̄ of the grete bataille for the nonys
Betwix athenes and̄ amasones
And̄ how besieged was Ipolita
The faire lady quene of Cithea
And̄ of the feste that was at hir weddynge
And̄ of the tempest at hir hom comynge
But al thynge I moot as now forbere
I have many wood a large feld to ere
And̄ wete ley the ox̄en in the plowe
The remenant of my tale is longe ynowe
I wil not lette eke none of this rowtes
Let every felowe telle his tale aboute
And̄ let se now who shal the soupere wynne
And̄ there I lefte I wil agayn beginne

This duke of whom I make mencion
Whan he was come almoste in to the toun
In al his wele and̄ his moste pryde
Where that he lineth in the high wey
A companye of ladies tweye and̄ tweye

The aftir other clothed in clothes blake
But fache a pey and fache a woo was made
That in this Warke nye meadue hyrynge
That here fache an other Weymentynge
And of this cry they Wolde nauer stynten
Tyl they the reynes of his herdyl hentyn
What folk be ye that at myn hom comynge
Perturbe me and my feste with cryynge
Quod Theseus haue ye so gret enuye
Of myn honour that thus compleyne & crye
Or Who hath you mysbodon or offended
Tel me and it shal be amended
And Why that ye be clothed thus in blak
The eldest lady of hem alle spak
Whanne she hadde swouned with a dedly chere
That it Was routhe to see and to here
She sayde lord to Whom fortune hath yeue
Victory and as a conquerour to lyue
Nought greueth vs your glory & your honour
But We beseke you of mercy and socour
Haue mercy on our Woo and distresse
Som drope of pyte for thy gentilnesse
Up on vs Wrechid Wommen let vs falle
For certis lord ther is non of vs alle
That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Now be We caytifs as it is wel sene
Thanked be fortune and hir fals Wheel
That non astat assureth to be Weel
Now certis lord to abyde your presence

Here in this temple of goddis clemence
We haue be waytinge al this fourtenyght
Now help vs lordy seth it is in thy myght
I wrecchedy wight that wepe thus
Was somtyme wif of Campaneus
That starf at Thebes accursidy be that day
Andy alle we that bey in this aray
Andy make al this lamentacion
We lostey alle our husbondis in that towy
Whiles the sege there aboute lay
Andy yet now the olde creon wel away
That lordy is now of Thebes that cyte
Fulfilledy of Jre andy iniquyte
He for despit andy his tiranny
To do the dedy bodyes vilony
Of alle our lordis whiche that bey slawe
Hath alle the bodyes on an heep Jdrawe
Andy wol not suffre hem be non assent
Neyther to be buryedy ne to be brent
But maketh houndis to ete hem in despyt
Andy with that wordy without more respyt
They fallen grouelynge andy crye pitously
Haue on vs wrecchidy wommen som mercy
Andy let our sorow synke in thy hert
This gentil duke of his courser sterte
With herte pitous whenne he herde hem spelke
Hym oughte his herte wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pitous andy so mate
That whilom were of so greet astate

And in his armes he hem alle vp hent
And hem comforted in ful goodly entent
And swore his oth as he was trewe kny3te
He wolde do so ferforth his my3te
Vp on the tiraunt Creon hym to wreke
That al the peple of grece sholde speke
Holde Creon was of Theseus y serued
As he that hath his deth wel deserued
And right anon without eny more abood
His baner he displayde and forth he rood
To Thebes ward and al his oste besyde
No ner Athenes nolde he goo ne ryde
Ne take his ese nat fully half a day
But on his wey that ny3te he lay
And sente anon Ipolita the quene
And Emely hir yonge suster shene
Vnto the toun of Athenes to dwelle
And forth he rideth ther is nomore to telle
The wood the stalu with spere and targe
So shyneth in his whit baner large
That alle the feldis glitteren vp and doun
And by his baner born is his penon
Of golde ful riche in whiche there was ybete
The Mynay whiche he wan in crete
This riche duke this riche conquerour
And in his oste of chiualrye the flour
Til that he cam to Thebes and alighte
Fer in a feld there as he thoughte to fighte
But shortly to speke of this thyng

With Creon whiche was of thebes kyng
He faught and slow hym manly as a knyght
In playn bataille and put his folk to flight
And at a sallye he wan the cyte after
And rente adoun wal sparre and rafter
And to the ladyes he restored ageyn
The bodyes of her husbondis that were sleyn
To do obsequyes as tho was the gyse
But it were al to long to deuyse
The grete clamour and the weymentyng
That the ladyes made at the buryyng
Of the bodyes and the grete honour
That Theseus the nobil conquerour
Dooth to the ladyes whan they fro hym went
But shortly forto telle is myn entent
Whan that this worthy duke this Theseus
Hath Creon slayn and wonne Thebes thus
Stille in the felde he took al nyght his rest
And dide with al the contre right as hym list
He ransaked in the taas of bodyes dede
Hem for to stryppe of harneis and of wede
The pilours dide hir bestialle and aure
After the bataille and the discomfiture
And befil that in that taas they fond
Thrawe girt with many a greuous wound
Two yonge knyghtis lyyng by and by
Bothe in one harneis wrought ful richely
Of whiche two arcite highte that one
And the other highte Palamon

Not fully quyk ne fully ded they were
But by hir cote armur and by hir gere
The heroldes knewh hem best in special
Alas that they were of the blood ryal
Of Thebes and of fustryn ilke yore
Out of the trase the pilours haue hem tore
And haue hem caried in to the tent
Of Theseus and he ful sone hem sent
To Athenes to dwelle there in prison
Perpetuel he nolde no raunson
And whan this worthy duke hadde thus don
He took his ost and hom he goth anon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour
And there he lyueth in ioye and in honour
Terme of his lif What nedith wordis moo
And in a tour with angwyssh and with woo
Dwellith Palamon and arcite
For euermore ther may no man hem quyte
Thus passed yeer be yeer day be day
Tyl it fyl oones in a morwenynge of may
That Emely that fairer was to se
Than is the lily vpon his stalk tree
And fresscher than may with flouris newe
For with the rose colour strof hir hewe
I not which was the feirer of hem two
Er it was day as was hir wont to do
She was aryssen and al redy dight
For may wol haue no slogardy a nyght
The sesson prickith euery gentyl herte

And maketh it out of his slepe to sterte
And sikenes arise to do hir obseruaunces
This makith Emely to haue remembraunces
To do honoure to may and for to rise
I clothed fressh was she to deuise
Her yelow heer was broided on a tres
Be hynd her hak a long yerd I ges
And in the gardyn at the sonne vprist
She walked vp and down as hir list
She gadred flowres part white and rede
To make a subtyl chapelet for hir hed
And as an aungel heuenly she songe
The grete tour that was so thicke and stronge
Whiche of the Castel was chief dungeoun
There as the knyghtis weren in prisoun
Of whiche I tolde you and telle shal
Was euene ioynant to the Castel wal
There as this Emely had her pleyyng
Bryght was the sonne and cleer in that morwyng
And Palamon this woful prisoner
As was his wone by leue of his gailer
Was risen and romed in the chambir on hy
In whiche al the noble cyte he sy
And eke the gardyn ful of braunches grene
There as fressh Emely the shene
Was in hir walk and romed vp and down
This sorowful prisoner this Palamoun
Goth in the chambir to and fro
And to hym self compleyned of his wo

That he was sory ful ofte he sayde allas
And so he fyll he aventure and cas
That thorow a wyndow thirlid of many a stone
Of every greet and squaar as eny spaare
He cast his yen vp on Emelia
And ther with as he blente he cryde a
As though he were stongyn to the hert
And with that cry arate anone vp stert
And sayde cosyn myn what eileth the
That art so pale and dedly on to see
Why cryest thou who hath do the offence
For goddis loue take al in pacience
Our prison for it may non other be
Fortune hath yeue vs this aduersite
Or ellis som wikked aspect or disposicion
Of saturne be som constillacion
Hath yeue vs this al they we had sworn
So stood the heuene whan we were born
We moste endure this is the short and playn
This Palamon answerd and sayde agayn
Cosyn forsothe of this opinion
Thou hast a leyn ymagynacion
This prison causid me not to crye
But I was hurt nold thurgh myn eye
Vnto my hert that wol my bane be
The fairnesse of a lady that I see
Yonder in the gardyn romynge to and fro
Is cause of my crynge and my wo
I not whether she be woman or goddesse

But venus it is soothly as I gesse
And therwith al on knees doun he fil
And sayde venus yf it be thy wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transmygure
Before me sorowful wrecche thy creature
Out of this prison help that we may scape
And if it be my destenye so to shape
Ye etery worlde to dye in prison
Of our lynage haue sorry compassion
That is so lowe I brought be tyrannye
And with that wordy arcyte gan espye
Where as the lady wente to and fro
And with that sighte her beaute hurte hym so
That yf palamon were wounded sore
Arcite is hurt as moche as he or more
And with a sigh he sighed pitously
The fresshe beaute slal sle me sodenly
Of hire that rometh in the yonder place
And but I haue hir mercy and hir grace
That I may se her at the leste wey
I am but ded ther is no more to sey
This palamon when he thise wordis herd
Dispitously he loketh and answerd
Whether saist thou this in ernest or in play
Nay quod arcite in ernest be my fay
God helpe so me lust ful litel to play
This palamon gan knytte his browes tway
Hit were quod he to the no gret honour
For to be fals ne to be a traitour

To me that any thy coſyn and thy bedeſman
I ſwoꝛn ſul depe and eche of vs to other
That neuer ſoꝛto dien in the peyn
Tyl that the deth departe ſhal vs tweyn
Neither in loue to hyndre other
Ne in no euil caas my leue brother
But that thou ſholdeſt truly further me
In euery caas as I ſholde further the
This was thyn oth and myn certayn
I woot it wel thou darſt it not withſayn
Thus art thou of my counſel without doute
And now thou woldiſt falſly be aboute
To loue my lady whom I loue and ſerue
And euyr ſhal tyl myn herte ſterue
Now certis falſe arcite thou ſhalt not ſoo
I louedꝛ hir firſt and tolde the my woo
As to my counſeyl and to my brother ſwoꝛn
I ſuppoſe thou louediſt hir here beforn
Woſt thou not wel the olde clerkis ſalue
That who ſhal yeue a louer ony lalue
Loue is gretter lalue be my ſame
Than may be yeue to ony erthly mame
And therfoꝛe poſitif lalue in ſuche degre
Is broken alday foꝛ loue in eche degre
A man moſte nedis loue maugre his hedꝛ
He may not fle it though he ſholde be dedꝛ
Al be ſhe mayde widowe or wyf
And eke it is not likly al thy lyf
To ſtonde in hir grace nomoꝛe ſhal I

For wel thou woost thy self verily
That thou and I be dampned to prison
Perpetually vs gayneth no raunson
We stryue as did the houndis for the bone
They faught all day and yet her part was none
Ther cam a curre while that they were so wroth
And hair allwey the bone betwix hem both
And therfore at the kyngis court my brother
Eche man for hym self there is non other
Loue yf thou list for I loue and shal
And sothly lief brother this is al
Here in this prison moste we endure
And euery of vs take his auenture
Gret was the stryf & long betwix hem tweye
Yf that I hadde leyser for to seye
But to the effect it happed on a day
To telle it shortly as I may
A Worthy duke that highte Pawtheus
That felow was to duke Theseus
But of that story list me not to endite
Duke Pawtheus loued wel arcite
And hadde hym knowe at thebes yeer be yeer
And finally at the request and prier
Of Pawtheus without eny raunson
Duke Theseus leet hym out of prison
Frely to go where hym list ouer al
In suche a gyse as I you telle shal
This was the forward playnly to endyte
Betwix duke Theseus and arcite

That if so were that arcite were founde
Euer in his lyf be day or be stounde
In ony contre of this duke Theseus
And he were caught it was accorded thus
That with a swerd he shold lese his hed.
Ther was non oder remedy ne reed
But taketh his leue & homward hym spedde
Let hym kepe his lyf ther to dede
Hit were a gret thing to telle and to wite
How gret sorow how suffraith arcite
How is me shapyn eternally to dwelle
Nought in purgatory but in helle
Allas that euer knew I paroteus
For ellis hadde I dwelt with Theseus
I fetered in his prison with woo
Than hadde I be in ease and not in woo
Only the sighte of hir whom that I serue
Though that I neuer her grace may deserue
Wolde haue sufficed right ynow for me
O dere cosyn palamon quod he
Thyn is the victory of this auenture
Ful blissful in prison mayst thou endure
In prison nay certis but in paradyse
Wel hath fortune to the turned the dyse
That hath the sighte of hir in myn absence
For possible it is sethnes thou hast hir presence
And art a knyght worthy and able
That by som cas syn fortune is chaungeable
Thou mayst som tyme to thy desire atteyne

But I that am exiled and bareyne
Of alle grace and so in gret despeir
That ther nys Water erthe fyre ne eir
Ne creature that of hem made is
That may me helpe or comfort do I wis
Wel oughte I sterue in Wanhope and distres
Far Wel my lif my luste and my gladnes
Allas Why playneyn men so in comune
Of purueaunce of god or of fortune
That yeueth hem ofte in meny Wyse
Wel better than hem self can deuyse
Som men desire to haue rychesse
That cause is of murdre or gret siknesse
And som may Wolde out of his prison fleyn
That in his hous of his meyne is sleyn
Infynyt harmes be in this matere
We Woot not What thing We praye here
We fareyn as he that dronke is as a mous
A dronken man Woot Wel he hath an hous
But he Woot not Whiche is the righte Wey thider
To a dronkyn man the Wey is slidir
And certis in this Worlde so fare We
We seken faste after felicite
But We go Wrongful ofte sikirly
Thus may We say alle and namely I
That Wente haue had a gret oppinion
That and I myghte scape out of prison
Than hadde I be in Joye and in parfyt hele
Ther now I am exiled fro myn hele

Sithnes J may not se you Emelye
J ne any but ded ther is no remedye
Vpon that other syde Palamon
Whan that he wiste arcite was gon
Such sorwe he maketh that the grete toun
Resounedy of his yelling and his clamour
The pure fetris on his shynys grete
Were of his bitir salt teris wete
Allas quod he arcite cosyn myn
Of al our strif god woot the fruyt is thyn
Thou walkist nowe in thebes at thy large
And of my woo you yeuest lityl charge.
Thou mayst say thou hast wisedom & manhede
Assemble alle the folk of our kynrede
And make warre so sharp on this contre
That by som auenture or by som tretе
Thou maist haue hir to lady and to wyf
For whom J muste nedis lese my lyf
For as by wey of possibilite
Sithnes thou art at large and of prison fre
And art a lordy gret is thyn auauntage
More than is myn shit her in a cage
For J may wepe and waile whylis that J lyue
With al the woo that prison may me yeue
And eke with peyne that loue me yeueth also
That doubleth al my tourment and my woo
Therwith the fyre of ielosye up stert
With ynne his brest and hent hym by the hert
So wodly that he lik a was to beholde

The holy tre or the ash tre dry or colde
That sayde se o cruel goddis that gouerne
The Worlde With bidyngy of your Worthy eterne
Andy Writen in the tabyl of the athament
Your parlement andy your eterny gaudent
What is mankynde more Vnto you holde
Thay is the shep that vonkith ny the folde
For slayn is may right as another beest
Andy duellith eke ny prison andy ny arest
Andy hath sikneſſe andy gret aduersite
Andy ofte tyme giltlees parde
What gouernaylle es ny this presience
That giltlees turmentith Innocence
Andy yet encresith this al my penaunce
That may is bounde to his obseruaunce
For goddis sake to lettyn of his Wil
There as a beest may al his Wil fulfil
Andy Whan a beest is dry he hath no peyne
But after his deth may may Wepe & playne
Though ny this Worlde he haue arre andy Wo
Withoute doute it may stonde so
The answer of this lete I to deuynes
But Wel I Woot that ny this Worlde gret pyne is
Allas I se a serpent or a theef
That many a treW may hath do myschief
Goon at his large & Where hym list may turne
But I muste be ny prison thourgh saturne
Andy thourgh hym vnhappy andy ark Woody
That hath destroidy Wel nygh al the blody

Of Thebes with his wyfe Emelie
And Venus sleeth me in that other syde
For Jelosie and fere of hym and Arcite
Now wot I stynte of Palamon a lite
And leve hym in his prison stille dwelle
And of Arcite forth I wol you telle
The somer passeth the nyghtes wexe long
Enarcith he doubil wyse the peynes strong
Bothe of the lover and of the prisoner
I ne wote who hath the wofuller mystir
For shortly to say of this Palamon
Perpetuelly is dampned to prison
In cheynys and in feters to be dede
And Arcite is exiled on his hede
For euermore and out of that contre
For neuer more shal he his lady se
Now louers axe I now this questyon
Who hath the worse of Arcite or of Palamon
That one may se his lady day be day
But in prison muste he dwelle al way
That other where hym list may ryde or goo
But se his lady shal he neuer moo
Now demyth as ye list ye that can
For I wil telle forth as I began
Whan that Arcite to Thebes come was
Ful ofte a day he swelte and sayde alas
For se his lady shal he neuer moo
And shortly to conclude al his wo
So moche sorwe ne hath creature

That is or ſhal be While the Worldy may dure
His ſleep his mete his drynk is hym beraft
That lene he Was andy deye as is a ſhaft
His yen holow andy grißly to be holde
His hewe falow andy pale as aſſhyn colde
Andy ſolitary he Was andy euer a lone
Andy Waylinge as he mighte makynge his mone
Andy yf he herde ſongy or inſtrument
Than Wolde he Wepe he mighte not ſtent
So febyl Were his ſpiritis andy ſo lolle
Andy chaungedy ſo that no mā coude hym knolle
His ſpeche ne his Wois though men it herde
As ny his gire for al the Worlde it ſerde
Nought like the louers maladye
Of heris but rathir I lik to many
Engendrid of humour malencolyk
Beforn in his eeſt fantaſtyk
Andy ſhortly turnedy Was al vp ſo doun
Bothe habit andy diſpoſicion
Of hym this Woful louer day arate
What ſholde I of his Wo alday endite
Whan he enduredy hadde a yeer or tWo
This cruel turment this peyne andy Woo
At Thebes in his contre as I ſayde
Vpon a nyghe in ſlepe as he hym layde
Hym thoughte holy that the Wyngedy Mercury
Beforn hym ſtoody andy bad hym be mery
His ſlepy zerdy he bare in hondy vp righe
An hat he bare vpon his heris knighe

Anon was this goddy as he took kepe
As he was wont argus took his slepe
And saide him thus to athenes thou shalt wende
There is the shape of thy woo an ende
And with that word arcite a book and sterte
Took trebly hold fore that me smerte
Quod he to athenes wil I fare
Me for no drede of deth shal I spare
To se my lady that I serue
In her presence recke I not to sterue
And with that word he caughte a mirrour
And sauh that chaunged was his colour
And sauh his visage al in another kynde
And right anon it ran hym in his mynde
That sithnes his face was disfigured
Of maladye the which he hadde endured
He myghte wel if that he lived hym lowe
Lyue in athenes evermore vnknowe
And se his lady wel nyh day be day
And right anon he chaunged his aray
And cladd hym as a poure laborer
And a lone saue only a poure squyer
That knew his priuite and his caas
Which was disguysed pourely as he was
To athenes is he gon the next way
And to the court he went vp on a day
And at the gate he profred his seruise
To drugh & to draw & what men wolde deuyse
And shortly of this mater forto sey

He fil in office toward a chamberleyn
The whiche that was dwellyng with Emelye
For he was wyse and wel coude aspye
Of every seruaunt whiche that serued there
Wel coude he hewe wode and watir bere
For he was yong and mighty for the nonys
And therto he was strong & big of bonys
To do that eny wight hym coude deuyse
A yeer or two he was in this seruise
Page in the Chambir of Emely the brighte
And Philostrat he sayde that he highte
But half so wel a louedy may as he
Ne was ther non in court of his degre
He was so gentyl of condicion
That thurgh al the court was his renoun
They sayde that it were charite
That Theseus wolde enhaunse his degre
And put hym in a worshipful seruise
There that he mighte his vertu exercise
And thus within a while his name sprong
Both of his dedis and of his tong
That Theseus hath take hym so nere
That of his chambir he made hym a squyere
And yaf hym gold to mayntene his degre
And eke men broughte hym out of his contre
From yeer to yeer ful pryuely his rente
But honestly and slightly he it spente
That no man wondred how that he it hadde
And ther yeer in this wise his lif he ladde

And bare hym in pees and eke in warre
Ther was noman that Theseus hadde derre
And in this blisse lete I now a while
And speke I wil of Palamon alite
In derkenesse horrible and in strong prison
This seuen yeer hath sete this Palamon
For pyned what for woo and distresse
Who feleth dowbyl woo and heuynesse
But Palamon that loue distreyneth soo
That wood out of his wit he ny goth for woo
And eke therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuel and not only for a yeer
Who coude ryme in englissh properly
His martirdom forsothe it am not I
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may
I wylle not taire yow alle the day
The thirde nyght as olde bokis sayn
That all this story telleth more and playn
Were it be auenture or destyne
Alas that why a thing is shapyn it shal be
That sone aftir the mydnyght Palamon
By help of a frend broke hath his prison
And fleeth fro the prison as sone as he may goo
For he hadde yeue his gailer drynke soo
Of clarree made of a certeyn wyne
With nercotises and Opye of Thebes fyne
That half ȳ night though men wolde hym shake
The gayler so slepte he might not awake
And thus he fleyth as faste as he may

The nyght was short & faste he the day.
That nedis cost he moste hym self hyde
And to a groue faste besyde
With dredful herte thay stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his opinion
That in that groue he wolde hym hyde alday
And in the night thay wolde he take his way
To Thebes ward his frendis forto prey
On Theseus to helpe hym verrey
And shortly eyther he wolde lese his liff
Or wynne Emelye to his wiff
This is the effect and the entent playn
Now wil I turne to arcite agayn
That litel wiste how nygh was his care
Til that fortune had brought hym in the snare
The mery larke messanger of may
Saluyeth in hir songe the morwe gray
And fyry Phebus ariseth so bright
That al the orient laugheth of the sight
And with his stremys dryeth the greues
The siluer droppis hangynge on the leues
And arcite that in the court ryal
With Theseus his squyer principal
Is risyn and loketh on the mery day
And forto do his obseruaunce to may
Remembrynge on the poynt of his desire
He on his courser startinge lik the fire
Is ridyn in to the feldis hym to pleye
Out of the Court were it a myle or tweye

And to the grouе of whiche that I you telle
By auenture his Wey he gan to holde
To make hym a garlond of the grenys
Were it of Wodebynde or of haWthorn leuys
And lowde he song ayens the sonne shene
May al thy floWris and thy grene
Welcome be thou fresshe faire May
In hope that I som grene gete may
And fro his courser With a lusty hert
Into the grouе ful lustely he sterte
And in a path he romed vp and down
Where as by auenture this Palamon
Was in a bussh that no man myghte hym se
Ful sore a ferd of his deth Was he
No thing knewh he that this Was arcite
God Woot he Wolde haue trowed it ful lite
But soth is sayd go fro his contre is many yeris
That feld hath eye and Wode hath eris
Hit is ful faire a man to bere hym euen
For al day meten at vnset stevene
For litel Wente arcite of his felawe
That Was so nygh to herken of his sawe
Wha that arcite hadde romed al his fyll
Palamon in the bussh knewh sittith stylle
And arcite song al the roundel lustily
Into a study he fyl sodenly
As don thise louers in hir queynte gyris
Knewh in the crop and knewh in the breris
Now vp now doun as bokat in a welle

Right as the friday sothly forto telle
Now it shyneth now it rayneth fast
Right so gan guerrá Venus ouer cast
The hertis of her folk right as her day
His guery thought so chaungeth his aray
Selde is the friday al the Wike lik
Whan that arcite hadde songe he be gan to sike
And he set hym down Without eny more
Allas quod he the day that I Was bore
How longe Juno thurgh thy cruelte
Wilt thou Werien thebes the Cyte
Alas y brought is to confusion
The blood royal of Cadyn and amphion
Of Cadimus Which that Was the first man
That Thebes bilt or first the town began
And of the cyte first Was crouned kyng
Of his lynage am I and of his offspryng
Be Verray lyne and of stok royal
And now I am so kaytyf and so thral
That he that is my mortal enemy
I serue hym and am his squyer pouerly
And yet doth me Juno Wel more shame
For I dar not be knowe myn owen name
But there as I Wont Was to highte arcite
Now highte I philostrat not Worth a myte
Allas thou fel mars allas Juno
Thus your ire hath our lynage al fordo
Saue only oon Wreched Palamon
That Theseus martrith in prison

And ouer all this to sle me bitterly
Loue hath his fyry dart so brennyngly
Ithrilled thorugh my tweld careful hert
That shapen was erst my deth or my shert
Ye sle me with your yen Emelye
Ye be the cause wherfore that I dye
Of al the remenaunt of myn other care
Ne sette I not the mountaunce of a tare
So that I coude do aught to your plesaunce
And with that word he fyl doun in a traunce
A longe tyme and afterward up stert
This Palamon that thought thorowh his hert
He felt a cold swerd sodenly glide
For ire he quoke he nolde no lenger abyde
And when that he hath herd arcites tale
As he were wood with face ded and pale
He start hym up out of the bussh thicke
And sayde arcite fals traitour wicke
Now art thou hent that loues my lady so
For whom that I have this peyne and woo
And art my blood and to my counceyl sworn
And I ful ofte have told the here beforn
And hast be iapped here duke Theseus
And falsly hast changed thy name thus
I wil be ded or ellis thou shalt dye
Thou shalt not loue my lady Emelye
But I wil loue her only and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortal fo
And though I have no weppen in this place

But out of prison any steré be grace
That thou sholdist dye of myn hondy
For I defie the seuerte and thy bondy
Whiche that thou saist I haue made to the
What Arrey fole thynk that loue is fre
And I Wil loue hire magre al thy mighe
But for as muche as thou art a knyghe
And Woldist darrayn here be bataille
Haue here my trouthe to morowe I Wil not faile
Withoute Witinge of ony other Wighe
That here I Wil be founden as a knyghe
And bryngen harneis righe ynowe for the
And chees the beste and leue the Worst for me
And mete & drynke this nyghe Wil I bringe
I nowe for the & clothis for thy beddynge
And yf so be that thou my lady Wynne
And sle me in this Wode that I am Inne
Thou maist Wel haue thy lady as for me
This Palamon answerdy I graunte hit the
And thus they be departydy tyl amorowe
Whan eyther of hem hath leydy her feith to borowe
Ocupiedy out of alle charite
O regne that Woldist haue no felowe With the
Ful soth is saidy that loue ne lordship
Wil not his thankes haue ony felaship
We fynde thus of arcite and Palamon
Arcite is ridey anoy into the toun
And on the morowe anoy or it Were lighe
Ful pryuely tWo harneis hath he dighe

Both sufficient and mete to darreyne
The batayle in the feld betwix hem tweyne
And on his hors alone as he was born
He caryed the harneis hym biforn
And in the grove at tyme and place set
This arcite and this Palamon bigyn met
To chaunge gan the colour in her face
Right as hunters the in regne of trace
That stondeth at the gappe with a spere
Whan hunted is the lioun and the bere
And hereth hym come russhing in the greves
And breketh bothe bowes and eke leves
And thinketh here comyth my mortal enemy
Withoute faile he muste be ded or I
For eyther I moste sle hym atte gappe
Or he muste sle me yf I mys happe
So ferden they in chaunging of her hue
As fer as ony of hem other knewe
Ther nas no good day ne saluynge
But streyght without wordis of rehercynge
Everich of hem helpith to arme other
As frendly as he were his owen brother
And after that with sharpe speris stronge
They foyne eche at other longe
Thou myghtist wene that this Palamon
In his fightinge were a lioun
And as a cruel tigre was arcite
As wilde boris gan they to gider smyte
That frothen white as foom for ire wood

Up to the ancle foughte they in her blood
And in this wyse I lete hem fightinge duelle
And forsoth I wil of Theseus telle
The destenye mynyster generall
That executith in the worlde ouer al
The purueaunce that god hath before
So strange it is that though ỳ worlde had swore
The contrary of a thinge be ye or nay
Yet somtyme it shal falle vp on a day
That falleth not eft in a thousand yeer
For certenly our appetitys heer
Be it of pees hate warre or loue
All is reulid be the sighte aboue
This mene I nowe be mighty Theseus
That forto hunte is so desirous
And namely at the grete hert in may
That in his bed ther daweth hym no day
That he nys clad and redy forto ryde
With hunte and horn and houndis be his syde
For in his huntynge hath he suche delite
That it is al his ioye and his appetite
To be hym self the grete hertis bane
For after Mars he seruyth nowe dyane
Cleer was the day as I haue told or this
And Theseus with al ioye and blis
With his Ipolita the faire quene
And Emely I clothyd al in grene
On huntynge be they rideyn rially
And to the groue that stoode ther fast by

In whiche ther was an hert as men hym tolde
Duke Theseus the streight Way hath holde
And to the launde he ridith ful right
For thider was the hert wont to haue his flight
And ouer a brook and so forth on his Way
The duke wolde haue assays of hym or ellEy
With houndis suche as he list to comaunde
And whan this duke was come to the launde
Vnder the sonne he lokyd and that anon
He was ware of arcite and palamon
That fought en eem as it were lolis two
The bright swerdis went to and fro
So hidously that with the leste strook
It semyd that it wolde haue fellyd an ok
But what they were no thing he ne woot
This duke with his spores his courser smote
And at a sterte he was betwix hem two
And pullyd out his swerde and sayde ho
Nomore on peyne of lesing of your hed
By mighty mars anon ye shul be ded
That smytith ony strook that I may se
But tellith me what myster men ye be
That ben so hardy to fight here
Withoute Juge or other officere
As thought it were in listis rially
This palamon answerde hastely
And sayde syre what nedith wordis moo
We haue the deth deserued both two
Two wofful wrecches be we and kaytifs

That ley vncombred of oure lyues
And as thou art a rightful lordy and [illegible]
Ne yeue vs neyther mercy ne refuge
But sle me first for saint charite
But sle my felow eke as wel as me
Or ellis hym first for they thou knowe hym lite
He is thy mortal so this is arcite
That fro thy londy was lanyshedy on his hedy
For whiche he hath deseruedy to be dedy
For this is he that cam to thy yate
And sayde that he highte Philostrate
Thus he hath iapedy the many a yere
And thou hast maadv hym thy chief squyer
And this is he that loueth Emely
For sothnes the day is come that I shal dy
I make pleynly my confessiō
That I am that wofful Palamon
That hath thy prisoy broke wickedly
I am thy mortal so and he am I
That loueth so hote Emely the bright
That I wil dye here present in her sight
Therfore I axe deth of my Jelwise
But sle my felow in the same wise
For both haue we deseruedy to be slayn
This worthy duke answerde anoō agayn
And saide this is a short conclusiō
Your owen mouth be your confessiō
Hath dampnedy you and I wil it recorde
It nedith not to peyne with the corde

Ye shul be dey be myghty mars the rede
The quene anoy for sorry Wommanhede
Say forto Wepe and so dede Emelye
And alle the ladyes in that compayne
Grete pyte Was it as hem thoughte alle
That ayr suche a chaunce sholde be falle
For gentilmen they Were and of grete astat
And no thing but for loue Was this debat
And sawe hir blody Woundis Wide and sore
And alle cryden bothe lasse and more
Haue mercy lordy vpon Vs Wymmen alle
And on her stare kinges down they falle
And Wolde haue kild hem there as they stoody
Tyl at the laste slakyd Was his moody
For pyte renneth sone in gentyl herte
And though he first for ire quoke and sterte
He considered shortly in a clause
The trespas of hem bothe and eke the cause
And al though that his ire here gilt causedy
Zit in his reson he hem bothe excusedy
And thus he thoughte Wel that euery man
Wil helpe hym self in loue al that he can
And delyuer hym self out of pryson
And eke in his herte he hadde compassion
Of Wommen for they Were euer in one
And in his gentil herte he thoughte anoy
And softe vnto hym self he sayde he
Vp on a lordy that Wil haue no mercy
But be a lordy bothe in Wordy and dede

To hem that ley in repentaunce and dede
As wel as a proud dispitous man
That wil mayntene that he first began
That lord hath litil of discressiõ
That in suche a cas can no diuisiõ
But weyeth pryde and humbles after one
And shortly whan his ire is thus agoõ
He gan to loke on hem with yen blake & wyde
And spak thise wordis al on hye
The god of loue a benedicite
How mighty and how gret a lord is he
Agayns his might ther gayneth noõ obstakyl
He may be clepid a god for his miraklyl
For he can make at his owen gyse
Of euery herte as hym list deuyse
Lo here this arcite and this palamon
That queyntly can out of my prisoõ
And mighte a lyuyd in thebes ryally
And knowen I am her mortal enemy
And that here deth lith in me also
And yet hath loue maugre hir yen two
Wrought hem hither both for to dye
Now loketh is not this an high folye
Who may be a fole but yf that he loue
Behold for goddis sake that sitteth aboue
Se how they blede be they not wel arayd
Thus hath her lord the god of loue hem payd
Her wages and her fees of her seruyse
And yet they wene for to be wyse

But this is yet the leste grame of alle
That she for whom they have this Jolle
Can hem therfore as muche thonk as me
She woot nowmore of al this hoot fare
Ne goth thay woot a Tuchild or any hare
But al muste be assayd hoot or colde
A man muste be a fool ponay or olde
I woot it be my self ful longe agoon
For in my tyme a seruaunt was I one
And therfore sethnys I knolde of loues peyne
And woot holde fore hit eny a man distreyne
As he that hath be caught in this laas
I yolde forgeue holly this trespaas
And at the requeste of the quene that kneleth here
And eke of Emely my suster dere
And ye shul bothe vnto me swere
That neuer ye shal my coumé dere
Ne make warre on me nyght ne day
But be my frendes in al that ye may
I yolde forgeue this trespas fayr and wel
And they hym swar his axyng euerydel
And hym of lordship and mercy prayde
And he hem graunted and thus he sayde
I spelke of worthy lynage and richesse
Though that she were a quene or a princesse
Eche of yolde bothe is worthy doutles
To wedde whan tyme is but nathéles
I spelke as for my suster Emely

For whom ye haue this strif and this Jelousy
Ye woot your self ye may not wedde bo
At onys theygh ye fighte euer mo
That one of you al be hym loth or lef
He mot go pype in ay Jupardy lef
This is to say she may not haue both
Al be ye neuer so ielous and so lothe
And for thy J you put in this degre
That eche of you shal haue his destine
As hym his shapyn and herbyn in what wyse
Lo here youre ende of that J shal deuyse
My wil is this for plat conclusion
Without ony vrpliacion
Yf that you liketh take it for the beste
That euerich of you shal go where hym liste
Frely without raunson or daunger
And this day fifty dayes ner ne ner
Euerich of you shal bringe ay hundred knyghtis
Armedy for listys vp alle rightis
Alredy to darreyne here be batayll.
And this behote J you without fayll
Upon my trouthe as J am trew knyghe
That whether of you both that migh
May with his hundredy as J spak of nowe
That is to sey whether he or thowe
Sle his contrary or oute of listys dryue
Hym shal J yeue Emely to wyue
To whom that fortune yeueth so fair a grw
The listis shal J make ey this place

And god so wisly on my soule rede
As I shal euene Juge be and trede
Ye shul non othir ende with me make
That one of you shal be ded or take
And yf ye thinke this is wel said
Saieth your auys and holde you payd
This is your ende and your conclusion
Who lokith nowe lighty but Palamon
Who springeth vp for ioye but arcite
Who cowde telle or who coude endite
The ioye that made is in this place
Whan Theseus hadde do so faire a grace
But doun a knees wente euery wight
And thanked hym with al her myght
And namely the Thebans ofte sithe
And thus with goodly hope and herte blithe
They take her leue and homward they ryde
To Thebes with olde walles wyde
I trowe men wolde it deme negligent
Yf I forzete to telle the entent
Of Theseus that goth so besily
To make vp the listis ryally
That suche an noble entre as it was
I dar wel say in this worlde ther nas
The cirkut a myle ther of was aboute
Walled with stoon and dyched roundy aboute
Roundy was the shappe in maner of a compas
Ful of degrees the highest of sixty pas
That whan a man was set in on degre

He letteth not his felow forto se
Estwardy ther was a gate of marbil whit
Westwardy suche another appositit
And shortly to conclude suche a place
Was non in erthe in so litel space
For in the londy ther was no craftis man
That gemetrie or ars metric can
Ne portreture ne keruar of Jmages
That Theseus ne yaf mete drynke & wages
The entre forto make and deuyse
And forto do his ryte and his sacrifice
He Estwardy hath vp on the gate aboue
In worship of venus goddesse of loue
Do make an auter and an Oratory
And on the westwardy in memory
Of marce hath he maad suche another
That coste large of goldy a fother
And northwardy in a tour of the wal
Of whit alabastre and reedy coral
An Oratory riche forto see
In worship of dyane goddesse of chastite
Hath Theseus do wrought in nobil wise
But yet hadde J forgete to deuyse
The nobill keruynge and the portreturis
The shap the countenaunce & the figuris
That weren in the Oratoryes thre
First in the tempil of venus thou maist se
Wrought in the wal ful petously to be holde
The broklyy slepis and the sighis colde

The sakeryd terys and the Weymentynge
The firy strokys and the desiryngé
That louers folkes in this Worlde endury
The othes be her couenauntis assurey
Plesaunce hope desire and fool hardinesse
Beaute and yongthe Iaudey and richesse
Charmys and sorcerye lesinges and flaterye
Dispence besinesse and Jelousye
That Wered of yelow gold a garlond
And a Cuckow sittyng on her hond
Festis instrumentis carolles and daunsis
Luste and aray and alle the circumstaunces
Of loue Whiche that I rekene and shal
Be ordir Were peynted on the Walle
And mo than I can make mencion
For sothly al the mounte of Citheron
There venus hath hir principal dWellyng
Was ghelwy on the Wal here portreyyng
With al the iope and al the lustinesse
Nought Was forgeten the Porters idelnesse
Ne Martysus the faire yore agoon
Ne yet the folye of kyng Salamon
The enchantement of Medea and hardynesse
Of Jason I Wil not now expresse
Ne of turnus With his hardy fyre corage
The riche Cresus captif in seruage
Thus may ye se that Wisedom ne riches
Beaute sleyghte strengthe ne hardinesse
Ne may With venus holde champartye

For as ſhe liſt the Worlde may ſhe gye
So alle thyſe folk caught Were in her laſe
Tyl they for Wo ful ofte ſayde allas
Suffiſeth thyſe enſamplis one or tWo
And tholWgh I coude reherse a thouſandy mo
The ſtatu of Venus glorious for to ſe
Was maady ſtetynge in the large ſe
And fro the nauyl doWn ſhe Was
With Walbis bright as ony glas
A wtel in hir right hondy hadde ſhe
And on her hedy ful ſemely on to ſe
A roſe garlondy freſſh & Wel ſmellyngy
A boue her hedy douues alſo fleyngy
Beforn hir ſtoody her ſone cupido
Vpon his ſhuldris Wyngis hadde he tWo
And blyndy he Was as it is ofte ſeen
A bolde he baar andy arowes cleey
Why ſholde I not elle telle of the Walle
The portreyynge that Was on hie alle
With in the tempyl of mighty mars the rede
Al Was peyntedy the Wallis in lengthe & brede
Lyke to the Eſtris of the gryſly place
That highte the grete tempyl of mars in trace
In that coldy northerny froſty regioun
There as mars hath his ſouereyn manſioun
Firſt on the Wal Was peyntydy a foreſt
In Whiche ther dWellith neyther may ne beſt
With knotty & knarry barreyn treys olde
Of ſtubbis ſharp & hidous to beholde

In whiche ray as a lymbyl in a ſwolke
As though it a ſtorm were ſholde breſt euery bolle
And dounward on an hil vnder abent
There ſtood the tempyl of mars armypotent
Wrought al of burnyd ſteel the whiche the entre
Was longe and ſtreight and gladly forto ſe
And ther out cam a rage and ſuche a leyſe
That it made al the gatis forto reyſe
The northerey light in at the dore ſhon
For lyndoll on the wal was ther non
Thurgh whiche men myghte ony light diſſerne
The doris were al of athemaundis eterne
I clenchid ouerthwart and endlonge
With Iren forto make it ſtrong
Euery pyler the tempyl forto ſuſteyne
Was tomme greet of yren bright and ſhene
There ſaw I firſt the derk ymagenyng
Of felony and al the compaſſing
The cruel ire reed as ony glede
The pykepurs and elde the pale rede
The ſmyler with the knyf vnder the cloke
The ſhepen brennyng with the blak ſmoke
The treſon of the murderyng in the bed
The oppyn werris with woundis alle bled
Contak with blody knyf and ſharp manace
Al ful of chirkyng was the ſory place
The ſleer of hym yet ſaw I there
His herte blood hath bated al his chere
The nayl I dryue in the ſhode ay bigh[te]

The colde deth With mouth gapynge vp right
A myddyl of the tempil sat myschaunce
With discomfort and sory contenaunce
Yet sawe I Woodnesse laughynge in his rage
The hunter strangled With the Wilde bores corage
The sowe fretynge the childe in the cradil
The cook I scalded for his longe ladil
Nought forzetyn Was the infortune of Mars
The carter ouer riden With his owen hors
Vnder the Wheel ful lowe he lay adoun
There Were also of martirs destruccioun
The barbour the boteler and the smyth
That forged sharpe swerdis in the stith
And al aboue depeynted in a tour
The high conqueste sittynge in gret honour
With the sharp swerde ouer his hede
Hangynge be a subtil twynned threde
Depeynted Was there the slaughtir of Julius
O grete Nero and of antonius
Al be that tyme they Were vnborn
Yet Was her deth peynted there beforn
Be manassynge of Marce right be figure
So Was it shewed right be portreture
As it is depaynted in the sercles aboue
Who shal be sleyn or dede for loue
Suffiseth on ensampyl in storyes olde
I may not rekene alle though I Wolde
The statu of Marce vp on a carte stode
Armyd and lokyd gryn as he Were Woode

And ouer his hed ther shyned two figures
Lyke vnto the figure of Gorgynes
That one Puella highte that other Julius
This god of armys was arayd thus
A Wolf ther stood before hym at his feet
With yen rede and of amay he eet
With subtile pensel was peyntyd this story
In vedolndynge of Marce and of his glory
Wold to the tempyl of dyane the chaste
As shortly as I can I wyl me haste
To telle yow al the descripcion
Depeyntyd on the Wallis vp and down
Of huntynge and of shamefast chastite
There saw I how Wofull Calistope
When that dyane greuyd was With here
Was turned fro Wommay in to a bere
And after Was she maad the lodi sterre
Thus Was it peynted I can say no ferre
Her sone is eke a sterre as men may se
There saw I dyane turned vntil a tre
I mene not the goddesse dyane
But Peneus doughter Whiche that highte dyane
There saw I atheon an hert I maked
For vengeaunce that he saw dyane al naked
I saw how that houndis haue hym caught
And fretyn hym for that they knewe hym nought
Yet I peynted Was a litel furthermore
How athalante hunted the Wylde bore
And meliager and many other moo

For whiche Diane wrought hym care & wo
There saw I many another wonder story
The whiche me list not drawe in memory
This goddesse on an hert high is sette
With smale houndis aboute her fette
And vndernethe hir feet she hadde a mone
Wexynge it was and sholde wane sone
In gaudy grene her statu clothed was
With bowe in hond and arwes in caas
Here eyen cast she ful lowe a downe
There pluto hath his derke regioun
A wommon travelynge was here before
But for hir child so longe was vnborn
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle
And sayde help for thou maist best of alle
Wel coude he peynte liuely that it wrought
With many a floreyn he thyse hewis brought
NOw kepe thise listis maad & Theseus
That at his grete cost hath arrayd thus
The temples and the autres ouerydel
Whan it was don it likyd hym wel
But stynte I wil of Theseus alite
And speke of Palamon and of arcite
The day approchith in hire attournynge
That euerich sholde an hundreid knyghtes bringe
The batayle to darreyne as I you tolde
And til Theseus here couenaunt for to holde
Hath euerich of hem brought an hundreid knyghtes
Wel I armed for the werre at al rightes

And sikirly ther trowbed many a man
That nayr sithnes the Worlde began
As forto speke of knyghthood of her hond
As fer as god hath made see and lond
Nas of so felle so nobyl a company
For euery wight that loued chyualrye
And Wolde his thankys haue passing name
He prayde that he myghte be of that game
And Wel Was hym that therto chosyn Was
For yf ther fyl to morow suche a caas
Ye knowe Wel that euery lusty knyght
That loueth paramours and hath his myght
Were it in engelond or ellis Where
They Wolde her thankys Willen to be there
To fight for a lady a benedicite
Hit Were a lusty sighte forto se
And right so ferthe they With Palamon
With hym ther Went knyghtis many oon
Some Wolde be armed in habergeon
Some in brest plate and in bright gippon
And some Wol haue a pair of platis large
And some Wolde haue spruse sheldis & targe
Some Wolde be armed on his leggis Wele
And haue an ax and a mace of steel
Ther is no nede gyse but it Was told
Armed Were they as I haue told
Euerich after his owen opinion
There maist thow se comyng With Palamon
Licurge hym self the kyng of trace

Blak was his berdy & manly was his face
The arcelis of his yey in hes heedy
They glowdeyn lettyr yelow andy reedy
Andy lyke a griffyn lokedy he aboute
With kempt heris in his browdis stoute
His lymes grete his bradly hardy & strongy
His shuldres brode his armes roundy & longy
Andy as the gyse was in his contre
Ful high vp on a chare of goldy stoody he
With four white bolis in the trace
In stede of Cote armure in his harnase
With naylis yelow & bright as ony golde
He hadde a bere skyn cool blak for olde
His longe heris were kempt behyndy his bak
As ony rauen fethir it shony for blak
A wreth of goldy arme grete of huge weyght
Vp on his hedy sat. with many a stone bright
Of fyn Rubyes andy of fyn diamantes
Aboute his chare ther wente alauntes
Twenty andy mo as grete as ony steer
To hunte atte lioun or ellis at the deer
Andy folowedy hym with mosel fastyd bounde
Coleres of goldy andy torettis filydy rounde
Ay hundridy lordis he hadde in his rowte
Armedy well as knyghtis sterne & stoute
With arcite as men in story fynde
The stronge Emetrius the kyngy of Inde
Vp on a bay stedyd trappidy al in steel
Armedy with a cloth of goldy dyapredy well

Cam ridynge the gody of armys Marce
His cote armur was of cloth of tarce
Tolbechidy with perlis white rounde andy grete
His sadyl was of brent goldy nelbe y bete
A mantelet oy his shuldris hangynge
Bret ful of rubyys braght as fyre sprynagynge
His braghte eyspe heris lykte ryngys were wonne
Andy that was yelolb & glitteredy as the sonne
His nose was hugh his yey braght andy grym
His lippis rounde his colour sanguyn
A felde frakelis in his face were spreynt
Betbix yelolb andy somdeel blak meynt
Andy as aliouy he lokydy aboute faste
Of .xxb. yeer of age I hym caste
His berdy was bel begonne forto sprynge
His throte was as a trompe sollynynge
Up oy his hedy he werydy of lauer greene
A garlondy fressh andy lusty forto sene
Upon his hedy he baar for his dedlyte
An egle as ony lily whit
An hundredy knyghtes hadde he with hym there
Al armedy sane her hedis andy al her gere
Were richely arayedy in alle maner thingis
Trustith bel that erlis dukes andy kyngis
Were gadredy in this nobyl companye
For loue andy encrese of cheualrye
Aboute this kyngy ther romeny oy euery part
Bel many tame lioums andy libart
Andy in this wyse the lordis alle andy sony

Bery on the sunday to the cyte com
Aboute prime & in the tolly a light
This Theseus this duke this Worthy knyght
Whan he hadde brought hem in to the cyte
And ymedy hem euerich at his degre
He festith hem and doth hem gret labour
To ese hem and to do hem al honour
That may ne Woman ne no maner Wight
Of none astat so coude amende it
The mynstralcye the seruise at the feste
The grete giftis to the most and lest
The riche aray of Theseus Paleys
Ne Who sat first ne last vp on the deys
Or What feirest or best daunsynge
Or Whiche of them can best daunce or synge
Ne Who most felingly speketh of loue
What halbeys sitte on the perchis aboue
What houndis lyen in the flour adoun
Of all this make I no mencion
But of the effect that thynketh me best
Now comyth to the poynt herken yf ye list
The sonday at myght or day began to springe
When Palamon herde the larke synge
Al that it Were not day be houris two
Vnto the temple purposeth he to go
With hool herte and With al high corage
Is risen to Wende on his pilgremage
To the blisful Citherea benigne
I mene Venus honourable and digne

And in her houre he walketh forth a pace
Unto the lystis there the temple was
And downe he kneleth and with humble chere
And with herte sore he sayde as ye shul here
Feyrest of feyre o lady myn Venus
Doughter to Jouis and spouse to Vulcanus
That gladdest al the mounte of Citheron
For that loue that thou haddest to adoun
Haue pyte on my bitter teris smert
And take myn humble prayer at thy hert
Allas I haue no lengthe forto telle
The effect ne the turment of myn helle
Myn herte may not myn harmys bewaye
I am so sorowful that I can not seye
But lady bright that knowest wel
My thought and seest the harmys that I fele
Consydere this and rewe vp on my sore
As wisly as I shal for euermore
Enforce my myght thy trewe seruaunt to be
And holde werre lady with chastite
That I make myn auowe so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armys forto yelpe
Ne I aye to mowe forto haue victory
Ne renoun in this caas ne veynglorye
Of pryse of armys to blowe vp and doun
But I wolde fully haue possession
Of Emely and dye in thy seruise
Fynd thou the manere how and what wyse
I recche not but yf it may better be

To haue victory of them or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myn armys
For though so be ỹ mars be grete god of armys
Your vertu is so greet in heuene aboue
That yf yow list I shal haue my loue
Thy tempyl wol I worshipe euermo
And on ay auter where I ryde or go
I wil do sacrefice and fires bete
And yf ye wil not so my lady swete
Thay praye I the to morwe with a spere
That arcite me thorwe the herte bere
Thay recke I nat whan I haue lost my lif
Though that arcite wynne here to his wyf
This is the effect and the ende of my prayer
Yeue me my lif my blissed lady dere
Whan that the orison was don of palamon
His sacrefice he did and that anon
Ful pitously with alle circumstaunces
Alle telle I not as now his obseruaunces
And al the statu of venus shoke
And made a signe wherby he took
That his prayer acceptid was that day
For though the figure shewde delay
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his bone
And with glady herte he wente hym hom sone
The thirde hour equal that palamon
Began to venus tempil forto gon
Up rose the sonne & up rose Emely
And to the tempil of diane gan hye

Her maidens that with her thider were lady
Ful redely with hem fair clothis they had
Theseus clothis and the remnaunt al
That to the sacrifise longyn shal
The temple ful of meth as was the gyse
There lacketh nought to do hir sacrifise
Smokyng the tempyl ful of clothis fair
This Emely with hert deboneir
Her body with water in a welle
But how she did there I dar not telle
But hit be ony thing in general
And yet it were a game to here it al
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge
But it is good a man to be at his large
Her bright heer was kempt and untressed al
And a coroune of grene oke serial
Up on her hed set ful fair and mete
Two firis on the amter gay she bete
And dyde here thynges as men may be holde
In state of Thebes and in lokis olde
Whan kyndeled was the fyre with pitous chere
Unto dyane she spak as ye may here
O chast goddesse of the wode grene
To whom both hevene and erthe & see is sene
Quene of the regne of pluto derk and lothe
Goddesse of maydens that my hert hast knowe
Ful many a yeer and wotist what I desire
As keep me fro the vengeaunce of thy fyre
That all myn aboughte trewly

Chaſt goddeſſe wel wotiſt thou that I
Deſire to be amaidey al my lyf
Ne neuer wol I be loue ne wyf
I am thou wotiſt yet of thy company
Amaidey andy loue humbynay andy tenory
Andy forto walkyn in the wodis wilde
Andy not to be a wyf andy be with childe
Nought wil I knowe no companye of may
Nowe help me lady ſithnes thou may andy ay
For the thre fourmes that thou haſt in the
Andy palamon that hath ſuche loue to me
Andy elle arcite that loueth me ſo ſore
This grace I pray the withouten more
As ſende loue andy pees betwix hem two
Andy fro me turne awey hert hertis ſo
That al hir hote loue andy her deſire
Andy al her beſy turment andy al hir fire
Be queynt or turnedy in another place
Andy if ſo be thou wilt do me no grace
Or yf my deſtenye be ſhapey ſo
That I ſhal nedis haue oy of hem two
As ſendy me hym that moſt deſireth me
Behold goddeſſe my clene chaſtite
The bittir teris that on my chekis falle
Sithnes thou art a maide & keper of vs alle
My maidenhedy thou kepe & wel conſerue
Andy whiles I lyue a maidey wil I the ſerue
Thiſe firis bleme vp oy the auters cleer
While Emely was thus in hir praiere

But sodenly she saw a sighte queynt
For right anon on of the fyres queynt
And quyckyd agayn and as fast that anon
That other fyre was queynt and al agon
And as it queynt it made a whisshyng
As doth thyse wete brondis in her brennyng
And at the brondis ende out ran anon
As it were dropis blody many on
For whiche so sore agast was Emely
That she was almost mad and gan to cry
For she ne wiste what it signifyed
But only for feer thus hath she cryed
And wepte that it was pyte to here
And therwith al dyane gan appere
With bowe in hond right as an hunteres
And sayde doughter stynt thyn heuynesse
Among the goddis an hyghe it is affermed
And by etern worde writen and confermed
Thou shalt be wedded vntil one of two
That haue for the so moche care and woo
But vnto whiche of hem may I not telle
Fare wel for I may no lenger dwelle
The fyres whiche on myn auter brenne
Shul the declarer or thou go henne
Thyn auenture of loue as in this cas
And with that word the arwes in the cas
Of the goddesse clateren fast and ryng
And forth she went & made a vanysshinge
For whiche this Emely astonyed was

And sayde What amounteth this ase
I put me vnder thy protection
Dyane and thy disposicion
And how she goeth anoy the nepte Dey
This is the effect ther is nomore to sey
And in the houre of Mars after this
Reite vnto the tempil Walkyd is
Of fyres of marce to do his sacrifise
With alle the rightis of his paynem Wyse
With pytous herte and high deuocion
Right thus to marce he sayde this orison
O strongy gody that in the regnes colde
Of trace honouredy art and lordy I holde
And hast in euery regne and euery londy
Of armys al the bridil in thy hondy
And hem fortunest as the list best deuyse
Accepte of me my pytous sacrifise
Yf so be that my thought may deserue
And that my myght be Worthy to serue
Thy godhede that I may be oy of thyy
Thay prey I the relbe oy my pyy
For that peyne and that hote fire
The Whiche that Whilom hondist for desire
Whay that thou vsedist the beaute
Of feyre yongy fressh venus fre
And hady of hir in thy armys thy Wille
And though the onys a tyme nys fille
Whay Volcanus hady caught the in his laas
And fondy the liggynge be his Wif alas

For that sowle that was in thy hert
Haue vdethe as wel vp on my prynys smert
I any yonge and vnkonnynge as thou woste
And as I trowe with loue offendid moste
Thay euer was ony lurys creature
For she that doth me al this wo endure
Ne reckith neuer whether I synke or flete
And wel I woot or she me mercy hete
I muste with strengthe wynne here in place
And wel I wot without help and grace
Of the may not my strengthe auayle
Thay help me lordy to morow in my batayle
For that fyre that whilom brent the
As wel as that fyre now brennyth me
And do that I to morow haue victory
Myn the trauayl and thyn be the glory
Thy souereyn tempyl wil I most honoure
Of ony place alwey and most laboureyn
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftis stronge
And in thy tempyl I wil my baner honge
And alle the armys of my companye
And euermore vntyl that I dye
Eterne fyre I wol besorn the fynde
And eke to this avowe I wil me bynde
My berdy my heer that hangith long adoun
That neuer yet felt offensioun
Of rasour ne of shere I wil the yeue
And be thy trewe seruaunt whilis I lyue
Now lordy haue vdethe vp on my sowdis sore

Yeue me the victory I aske nomore
The prayer stynt & arcite the strongy
The ringis that on the tempil dore hongy
And eke the dores clatteredy so faste
Of whiche arcite somwhat hym agaste
The fyris brende vp on the auters braighte
That it gan al the tempil for to lighte
A sote smel anon the groundy vp yaf
And arcita anon his hondy vp gaf
And more encence in to the fire caste
With other rightis and at the laste
The statu of marce began his hanberk ringe
And with that sowdy he herde a mornynge
Ful lowde and dym and sayde victory
For whiche he yaf to marce honour and glory
And thus with ioye and hope wel to fare
Arcite anon to his Inne is fare
As fayn as fowle is of the braighte sonne
And right anon suche strif is there begonne
For that grauntynge in heuene aboue
Betwix venus goddesse of loue
And marce the sterne godi armypotent
That Jupiter was fayn it to stynte
Tyl that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knew so many of auenturis olde
Fondy in his experience and art
That he ful sone hath plesedy euery part
As soth is saidy eldy hath gret auauntage
In eldy is bothe wisedom and vsage

Mey may the olde out renne but not out rede
Saturn anoy to stynte strif and drede
Al be it that it is ayens his kynde
Of al this strif he can remedies fynde
My dere doughter dere quod Saturne
My cours that hath so wyde for to turne
Hath more power than hath ony man
Myn is the drenchynge in the see so wan
Myn is the pryson in the derke cote
Myn is the strangelynge & hangynge be the throte
The murmur and the chorlis rebellynge
The groynynge and the preue empoysonynge
I do vengeaunce and pleyn correction
Whiles I dwelle in the signe of the lion
Myn is the ruyne of the high halles
The fallynge of the touris and of the walles
Vp on the mynour and vp on the carpenter
I slough Sampson shakynge the pyler
And myne ben the maladyes colde
The grete treson and the cautels olde
My lokynge is the fader of pestelence
Now wepe nomore I shal do my diligence
That Palamon that is thyn owen knyght
Shal haue his lady as thou hym behight
And mars shal kepe his knight yet natheles
Betwix you ther muste be somtyme pees
Al be ye not of on complexion
That causith alday such diuision
I am thyn al redy at thy wille

Wepe nold nomore J wil thy luſt fulfille
Nold wol J ſtynte of the goddes aboue
Of marte and venus goddes of loue
And telle you al pleynly as J can
The grete effect of whiche J began
GReet was the feſte in attenes that day
And eke the luſty ſeſon of may
Made euery wight to be in ſuche pleſaunce
That al that moneth Juſte they & daunce
And ſpenden it in venus high ſeruiſe
But be cauſe that they ſholden arriſe
Erly forto ſe the grete fight
Vnto her reſte wente they at nyght
And on the morwe whan day gan ſpringe
Of hors and noyſe harneis and claterynge
Ther was in hoſtelries al aboute
And to the paleys ther rideth many aroute
And lordis vp on ſtedis and palfreys
There maiſt thou ſe deuyſinge of harneys
So vncouthe and ſo riche and wel
Of goldſmythrye of browderye & of ſubtel
The ſheldis bright teſteris and trappoures
Goldy helmes habergeons & cote armoures
Rayngn the ſperis and helmes bokelynge
Stydynge of ſheldis with leyners laſynge
There as nede is they were no thing idyl
The ſomy ſtedes on the goldyn bridyl
Gnawynge and faſte the armerers alſo
With file and hamer prikynge to and fro

Grenyng on fote and knaues many on
With ſharpe ſtaues thicke as they may gon
Pipes trompis nacoures and clarionis
That in the batayle blew blody ſoun
The paleys ful of pepyl by ay doun
Here thre here .xty holdyng her queſtion
Demynge of the thebay knyghtis two
Sum ſayde thus ſome ſayde it ſhal be ſo
Some held with hym with the blak berd
Som with the ballyd .ſome with ỳ thicke herd
Some ſayde he lokedy grym and he wolde fyghte
He hath a ſparth of .xx. pounde of wyghte
Thus was the halle ful of demenynge
Longe aftir that the ſonne gan to ſpryng
The grete Theſeus that of his ſleep is walkyd
With mynſtralſie & noyſe that was makyd
Held yet the chambre of his paleys riche
Tyl that the thebay knyghtis both ỳ liche
Honoured were and in to the paleys ſet
Duke Theſeus is at the wyndow ſet
Arayd as he were god in trone
The pepyl prece thiderward ful ſone
Hym for to ſeen and his high reuerence
And eke to harkyn his heſt and his ſentence
An herowde on a ſkaffold made an O
Tyl that the noyſe of the pepyl was do
And when he ſaw the pepyl of noyſe al ſtille
Thus ſhewde he the myghty dukes wille
The lord hath of his high diſcreſſion

Conſidered that it were deſtruction
To gentil blood to fighte yn this wyſe
Of mortal bataille nowe in this empryſe
Wherfore to ſcape that they ſholde not dye
He wil his firſte purpos modifye
Noman therfore on peyne of loſyng his lif
No maner ſhot. ne pollax. ne ſhort knyf
Vnto the liſtis bryng. ne thider ſende
Ne ſhort ſwerdy forto ſtyke bytende
Ne noman to dralbe ne bere be his ſyde
Ne noman ſhal to his felaw ryde
Foynyng if hym liſt on fote hym ſelf to wreke
Ne noman ſo hardy this ordenaunce forto breke
And he that is at myſchief ſhal be take
And not ſlayn. but brought to the ſtake
That ſhal be ordeyned on eyther ſyde
But thider he ſhal be force and there abyde
And if ſo falle the cheeftayn be take
On either ſyde or ellis ſleeth his make
No lenger ſhal the turneyyng laſte
God ſpede you goth on and leith on faſte
With longe ſwerdis & maces fight your fil
Goth nowe your wey this is the lordis wil
The lois of the peppl to wchidy heuene
So lowde cryde they with mylde ſteuen
God ſaue ſuche a lordy that is ſo goody
He willith no deſtruction of bloody
Vp goth the trumpis andy the melodye
And to the liſtis rydith this compayne

The ordenaunce thourgh out the cyte large
Hangynge with cloth of gold & not with sarge
Ful like a lordy this nobyl duke gan ryde
Thyse two thebans on eyther syde
And after wode the quene and Emely
And after hem of ladyes another company
And after hem comunes eche after his degre
And thus they passe thurgh the cyte
And to the listis come they betyme
Hit is not of the day yet fully pryme
When set Theseus was riche on highe
Ipolita the quene and Emelie
And other ladies in degrees aboute
Unto the setes passeth al the route
And after warde thurgh the yates of Marte
Arcite and eke the hundredy of his parte
With baner reedy is entredy right anon
And in that selue moment Palamon
Is vnder Venus estward in that place
With baner and hardy chere of face
In al the worlde to seke up and doun
So euene without variacioun
Ther nere swiche companyes tweye
For ther was noon so wyse that coude seye
That ony hadde of other auauntage
Of worthinesse ne estate ne of age
So euen were they chosen for to gesse
And in two ranges faire they hem dresse
And when that hir names redy were euerichon

That in her noumbre gile was ther noon
Tho were the yatis shyt and cride was loude
Doth nolde your deuer yong knyghtis proude
The heroldes lefte hir pikynge vp and doun
Nolde rynegyn trompis lolde and clarioun
Ther is nomore to sey but est and weste
In goth the speris ful sadly in the reste
Ther shyueryn shaftis vp on shel dis thikke
He selith thorowe the hert spon the prik
Vp springith speris twenty foot on highte
Out goth the swerdis as the siluer brighte
The helmes therto helpen and to shrede
Out brestith the blood with stoute stremys rede
With mighty maces the bonys they to breste
And thorowe the thickest they throng & threste
There stomblyn stedis strong & doun falle
He wlith vnder foot as doth a balle
He soyneth on his foo with his trunchon
And he hurte lith with his hors adoun
He thorowe the body is hurt and sithnes take
Magre his heed and brought to the stake
As forward was right there he moste abide
Another ledy is on that other side
And somtyme doth hem Theseus to reste
Hem forto refresshe and drynke yf theym liste
Ful ofte a day haue the thebans ebo
To geder y met and wrought eyther wo
Vnhorsid hath eche other of hem tweye
Ther is no tiger in the vale of galefeye

Whey that her whelpe is stole whey it is lite
So cruel on the hunte as is arcite
For ielous herte upon this palamon
Ne in belmarie ther is non so sel alloun
That huntith is or for angir wood
Ne of his pray desiryth so the blood
As palamon to sle his foo arcite
The ielous strokis on her helmys bite
Out vermeth blood on both her sides reed
Som tyme an ende ther is of euery dede
For or the sonne out of the west went
The stronge kyng emetrius gan hent
This palamon as he fought with arcite
And made his swerd depe in his flesh bite
And by the force of twenty was he take
And yolden and drawe to the stake
And in the rescous of this palamon
The stronge kyng lygurge is born adoun
And kyng emetrius for al his strengthe
Is born out of his sadil a swerdis lengthe
So hitte hym palamon or he were ytake
But al for nought he was brought to the stake
His hardy herte myghte hym helpe nought
He muste abyde whey he was caught
Be force and eke be compocicion
Who sowlweth nolde but this palamon
That muste nomore go ayen to fight
And whan that theseus harde seye that sight
He cryde thay ho. nomore for it is done

Me noȝ ſchal lenger vnto his ſelaw gone
I wil be trelbe Juge andȝ not party
Arcite of thebes ſchal haue Emely
That by his fortune hath her feir Jwonne
Anoȝ ther is anoyſe of pepil begonne
For ioye of this ſo loude andȝ higȝ with al
That it ſemedȝ that ye liſtys ſchulde fal
What can nolw faire venus done aboue
What ſaith ſhe what doth the quene of loue
Wepith ſo for wantynge of hir wil
Til that her teris in the liſtys fil
She ſayde I am a ſchamedȝ doutlees
Saborne ſayde doughter holdȝ thy pees
Marce hath his wil the knyghte hath his bone
Andȝ by my hoodȝ thou ſchalt be eſedȝ ſone
The trompettis with the lolwdȝ mynſtralſie
The herwdes that ful lowde houle andȝ crye
Gene in her ioye for the weel of dane arcite
But herkeneth me andȝ ſtyntith alite
Whiche a miraklil eker be fil anone
This fierce arcite hath his helm of done
Andȝ on a courſer for to ſchewe his face
He pryked endlongȝ the large place
Lokynge vpwardȝ vp on this Emelye
Andȝ ſhe agayn hym caſt a frendly ye
For wommen for to ſpeke of comune
They folowe alle the fauour of fortune
Andȝ was al in his chere as in his herte
Out of the grwndȝ a fire infernal ſterte

From pluto sent atte requeste of saturne
For whiche his hors for feer gan to tarne
And lepte a syde and foundred as he lepte
And or that arcite may take kepe
He pighte hym on the pomel of his hed
That in the place he lay as he were ded
His brest to brosten with his sadyl bowe
As blak he lay as ony cole or crowe
So was the blood ronne in his face
Anon he was born out of the place
With herte sore to theseus paleys
Tho was he corryed out of his harneys
And in a bed brought ful feyre and blyue
For he was yet in memory and alyue
And alwey crying after Emelye
Duke theseus with al his compayne
Is come hom to athenes his cyte
With al blis and gret solempnite
Al be it that this auenture was falle
He nolde not discomforte hem alle
Men sayde eke that arcite sholde not dye
He sholde be holpe of his maladye
And of another thing they were feyn
That of hem alle ther was non seyn
Alle were they sore hurt and namely one
That with a spere was thrilled the brestbone
The othir wondis and the broke bones
Some hadde salues made for the nones
Fomaces of herbes and eke saine

They dronkyn for they wolde her lyues haue
For whiche this nobil duke as he wel can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuell al the longe nyght
Vnto the straunge lordis as it was right
Ne there was holden no discomfytynge
But as a Justes or a turmentynge
For sothly ther was no descomfiture
For saylyng nys but auenture
Ne to be lady be force vnto the stake
Vn yeldyn and with twenty knyghtis take
Or pfone allone with oute mo
And hariedy forth be arme foot and bo
And eke his stede dryuen forth with stauys
With footmen lothe yemen and knauys
Hit was a vetenedy hym no relonye
Ther may nomay clepe it a cowardrye
For whiche anon duke Theseus let crye
To stynten al rancour and enuye
The degre as wel in o side as in other
And eythir side lyk as othir brothir
And yaf hem giftis after her degre
And fully heldy a feste dayes thre
And conueyedy the knyghtis worthily
Out of his toldy a iourney largely
And hom wente euery man the right way
Ther was no more but farwel haue goody day
But forto speke of Palamon e arcite
Of Palamon wil I stynte alite

That ſwelleth the breſt of arcita and the ſore
Encreſeth at his hert more and more
The cloteryd blody ſor ony leche craft
Corrupteth and in his bouk is laft
That neyther veyne blood ne ventoſynge
Ne drynke of herbis may be his helpynge
The vertu expulſif or anynatif
Ne that vertu J clepyd natural
Ne may the venym voyde ne expelle
The pipis and his lungis gan to ſwelle
And euer lacert in his breſt adoun
He is ſchent with venyme and corrupcion
Hym gayneth nothing for to gete his lyf
He voydeth vpward and downward laxatif
Al is to broſten that regioun
Nature hath in hym no dominacion
And certeynly ther nature wol not wirche
Fare wel fyſik go ber the may to chirche
This is al and ſom arcite muſte dye
For whiche he ſendith after Emelye
And Palamon that was his coſyn dere
Than sayde he thus as ye ſchul after here
Nou may the wofful ſpiryt in my hert
Declare a poynt of alle my ſorwes ſmert
To you my lady that J loue moſt
Right thus bequethe J the ſeruiſe of my goſt
To you aboue euery creature
Sith nes that my lyf may no lenger dure
Alas the peyne alas the woo ſtrongh

That I for you haue suffrid and so long
Alas the deth, alas my Emelye
Alas the departyng of our companye
Alas my hertis quene, alas my lyf
My hertis lady ender of my lyf
What is the Worlde What availeth men to have
Nold With his loue nold colde in his grave
Alone Withouten ony company
Fare Wel my swete foo my Emelye
And softe take me in your armes tWeye
For the loue of god & herkeneth What I say
I have here With my cosyn Palamon
Had stryf and rancour many a day agoon
For the loue of you, and of my ielousye
And Jupiter so Wisly my soule gye
As in this Worlde right nold knolde I non
So Worthy to be louede as Palamon
To serue you and Wel do al his lif
And if that euer ye shul be a Wif
Forgetith not the gentyl Palamon
And With that Word his speche Was ny agon
For fro his feet vnto his brest Was com
The colde of deth that hath hym ouercom
And yet more ouer for in his armes tWo
The vital strengthe is lost and al ago
Saue only the intellectis Withouten more
That dWellith in his herte sike and sore
Gan fayle When the herte felith deth
Dusshid his yen to and fayleth his breth

But on his lady yet caste he his ye
His laste bonde was mercy Emelye
His spirit chaungith the hous ȝ wente there
As I can nexte I can not telle where
There y stynte I am no deuynystre
Of soulis fynde I not in this regystre
Me me ne list the opynyons to telle
Though y wrote myghte y note where they dwelle
Nor why I spelke forth of Emelye
That sorowith and cryeth I wyl not lye
Nor wepith Emelye ȝ waylith Palamon
And Theseus his sustir tokē anon
Stekenynge and bare hir fro the corse away
What helpith it to tary forth the day
To telle how she wepte bothe eue and morow
For in suche caas wommen haue suche sorow
Whan that her husbondis be fro hem ago
That for the more part they sorowen so
Or ellis falle in suche a maladye
That at the laste certaynly they dye
Infynyte ben the sorowis and the teris
Of olde folk and folk of tendre yeris
In al the toun for deth of this thebany
For hym ther wepith bothe child and man
So greet wepynge was ther non certayn
When Ector was brought al fresh I slayn
To Troye allas the pyte that was there
Crakynge of chekys rentynge of here
Why woldest thou be dede this wymmen crye

And hadeſt golde ynough and Emelye
No may myghte glade Theſeus
Sauynge his olde fader Egeus
That knelb this Worldis tranſmutacion
As he hadde ſeen it chaunge bp and doun
Joye after Woo and Wo after gladneſſe
And ſhewde hym enſaumple and lykneſſe
Right as there deyde neuer man quod he
That he ne louedy in erthe in ſom degre
Right ſo there lyuedy neuer man he ſeyde
In al this Worlde that ſom tyme he deyde
This Worlde is but a thorwb fare ful of Wo
And we be pylgrymes paſſinge to and fro
Deth is an ende of euery Worldis ſore
And ouer al this yet ſayde he mykyl more
To this effect ful Wiſely to enhorte
The peple that they ſholde hem recomforte
Duke Theſeus With al his beſy cure
Caſte nolb Where the ſepulture
Of goody Arcite may beſt y makyd be
And eke moſt honourably in his degre
And at the laſte he took concluſion
That there as firſt Arcite and Palamon
Hadde for loue bataylle hem betWeen
That in that ſelue groue ſWete and green
There as he hadde his amerous deſirys
His complaynt and for loue his hote fyrys
He Wolde make a fire in the Whiche the office
Funeral he myghte fully acomplice

And let anon to hacke and to helue
The olde and lay hym on a uelue
In all hyne Bel amaid forto brenne
His officers With ſwift feet they renne
And redy anon at his comaundement
And after this Theſeus hath ſent
After a bere and he it ouer ſpradd
With clothis of gold the richeſt that he had
And of the ſame he clothid arcite
Vp on his hondis his gloues White
And on his hed a coroune of lauer grene
And in his hond a ſwerd ful bright & kene
He layde hym bare the viſage on the bere
Ther With he Wepte that pite Was to here
And for the peple ſholde ſe hym alle
Whan it Was day. he brought hym in to the halle
That thorough the cite and the ſolin
The cam this Woful theban Palamoun
With flotterid berd. and ruggid aſſhy heris
In clothis blak droppid al With teris
And paſſinge other of Weping Emelye
The reufulleſt of al the companye
In as muche the ſeruiſe ſhuld be
The more nobyl and riche in his degre
Duke Theſeus let thre ſtedis forth bringe
That trappid Were in ſteel al glitteringe
And couered With the armys of arcite
Vp on the ſtedis grete and White
Ther ſatyn folk of Whiche one bare his helm

Anothir a spere vpon his hondis held
The thirde bare with hym his bolde turneys
Of brend gold was the cras and the harneys
And rideth forth a pas with sorowful chere
Tobardy the grove as ye shul after here
With slak pas and yede and went
Thorow out the cite be the maister strete
That spred was al with blac wonder hye
Right of the same is the strete I wrye
Up on the right hond went olde Egeus
And on that othir side duke Theseus
With tesselis of gold in hir hond ful fyne
And ful of hony mylk, blood and wyne
Eke Palamon with ful greet compayne
And after that cam Bosul Emelye
With fire in hond as was that tyme the gyse
To do the office and the funeral seruise
High labour and ful greet apparelynge
Was at the seruise of that fire makynge
That with his greene top the heuen raughte
And thenty fadom of brede the armys straughte
This is to say the bolbes were so brood
Of straw first was layd ful many a lood
But how the fire was made up an heyghte
And as to telle you what the treys highte
As ok firre birch, ash, alder holm popler
Mapil thorn, bech, aspe, lind chesteyn lynd, laurer
Wilow, elme, plane hasil and whipultre
How they were fild shal not be told for me

Me holde the goddis remayn vp a[illegible] doun
Disherited of theyr habitacion
In whiche they wonedy in reste and pes
Nymphes faunus and amarides
Me holde the bestis and the briddes alle
Fillen for feer whan the wode gan falle
Me holde the ground agaste was of the light
That was not wont to se the sonne knight
Me holde the fyre was colchidy first with stre
And than with deye stickys clouty on thre
And than with grene wode and spicery
And than with cloth of goldy made with prey
And garlondis hangynge with many a flour
The mirre the encence with swete odour
Me holde arcite lay amongy al this
Me what richesse aboute his body is
Me holde that Emelye as was the gyse
Put in the fyre for funeral seruise
Me holde she swolwedy whan made was the fyre
Me what she spak ne what was her desyre
Me what iewellis meny in to the fyre caste
Whan that the fyre was gret & brende faste
Me holde sony caste her shelde and sony her spere
And of her testimentis whiche that they were
And arrays ful of mylk wyne and blody
In to the fyre that brent as it were wody
Me holde the grekis with an huge route
Thries ridey al the fyre aboute
Op on the lift hondy with an high shoutynge

And thries with here speris clateringe
And thries hold the ladyes gay aye
Me hold that ledy was lombardy Emelye
Me hold arcite is trent to asshen coldy
Me hold the lich wakis were y holdy
That ilke nyght ne hold the grekis pleye
The wake pleyes kepe I not to seye
Whiche wrastelleth best naked with oyl anointedy
Me who that bare hym best at the poynt
I wil not telle al hold they goon
Hom to attenes when the pley is doon
Ent shortly to the poynt than wol I wonde
To make of my longy tale ay ende
The proces and the lengthe of certeyn yeris
All stynt is the mornynge and the cheris
Of grekis be on general assent
Thān semyth me there was a parlement
At attenes upon certeyn poynt and cas
And among the whiche pyntis spoken was
To haue with certayn contrees alyaunce
And haue fully of Thebes obeissaunce
For whiche this nobil Theseus anon
Let sende after gentyl Palamon
Unwist of hym what was the cause and why
But in his blake clothis sorowfully
He cam at his comaundement ay hye
Tho sent Theseus for Emelye
Whan they were set and pees was al the place
And Theseus abiden hath a space

Or ony Wordy eany from his Wyfe lieft
His yen he caft there as hym lift
And With a fadi Vifage he ftaydy ftille
And aftir that right thus he fayde his Wille
The firfte mouer of the cauſe aboue
Whan he firſt made the cheyne of loue
Great Was the effect & high Was the entent
Wel Wiſte he Why and What ther of he ment
For With that fair cheyne of loue he bondy
The fyre the eyr the Watir and the londy
In certeyn bondis that may not fle
The ſame prince & the ſame mouer quody he
Hath ſtabliſſhedy in this Wrechidy Worldy a dony
Certayn dayes and dyracion
To al that is engendrid in this place
Ouer the Whiche day they moſt not pace
Al molde they the dayes abrigge
Ther nedith noy auctorite to legge
For it is preuedy be experience
But that me liſt to declare my ſentence
Thay may Wel meny be this ordre diſcerne
That ilke mouer ſtabyl is and eterne
Wel may meny knolde but it be a fool
That euery party darreynydy fro his hool
For nature hath not take his begynnyng
Of one part or of a cantel of a thing
But of a thingy that parfyt is and ſtable
Deſcendyng ſo tyl it be corumpabyl
And therfore for his Wyſe purueaunce

He hath so wel he set his ordenaunce
That specifieth of thingis and progressions
Sholden endure he successions
And nought eterñ without ony lye
This maist thou vnderstonde and se at ye
Lo the ook that hath so long a norisshynge
Fro the tyme that he begynneth to sprynge
And hath so long lif as ye may se
Yet at the laste wastith is the tre
Considereth hold that the hard stoon
Vnder our feet/on whiche we trede and goon
Yet wastith it as it lith he the wey
The hroody ryuer sumtyme wexith drey
The grete tolnes se we wane and wende
Thay ye se that al thing hath an ende
Of man of wommay se we also
That nedith in one of the termys two
This is to say in yongthe or ellis in age
He moot be ded the kyng as shal a page
Som̄ in his bed som̄ in the depe see
Som̄ in the large feld as ye may se
Ther helpith nought alle goy that ille weye
Thay may I say al thing mot nedes deye
What makith this but Jubiter the kyng
That is prince and cause of al thing
Conuertynge vs alle vnto his propre wil
For whiche it is dareynedy soth to tell
And for agayns it no creature a lyue
Of no degre auaileth forto stryue

Thay is it Wisedom as thynketh me
To make vertu of necessite
And take it Whilis We may not it eschewe
And thynketh that to Vs alle it is due
And Who so gruchith he doth folye
And rebel is to hym that al may gye
And certeinly a man hath most honour
To dien in his most excellent flour
Whan he is sikir of his goodi name
Than hath he do his frendi no harm ne shame
And gladder may his frendi be of his deth
Whan With honour so vp yolden is his breth
Than Whan his name appallidi is for age
For al forzetery is than his Vasselage
Than is hit best as for a Worthy fame
To dien Whan he is best of name
Ere contrary eke for al his Wilfulnesse
Why gruche We Why haue We heuynesse
That goodi arcite of cheualrie ere flour
Departidi is With duete and honour
Out of ere foule prison of this lif
Why gruchidi his cosyn and his Wif
Of his Welfare that loueth hym so Weel
Can he hem thanke nay godi Woot neuer a deel
That bothe his soule and eke hym offende
And yet they mowe her lustes not amende
What shal I conclude of this longe storj
But aftir Wo I rede Vs be merj
And thonke Jupiter of al his grace

And er we departen from this place
I rede we make of sorwes chere
And parfit ioye lastyng euer more
And lokieth now where most sorwe is ynne
There wil I first amende and begynne
Sustir quod he this is my full assent
With al the auyse of my parlement
That gentyl Palamon your owen knyght
That seruieth you with herte and myght
And euer hath do syn ye first hym knewe
That ye shul of your grace on hym rewe
And take hym for husbonde and lorde
Lene me your honde for this is oure accorde
Let se now of your wommanly pyte
He is a kynges sone and brother parde
And though he were a poure bacheler
Syn he hath serued you so many a yeer
And had for you so grete aduersite
It moste be considered leuyth me
For gentyl mercy oughte to passe right
Thus sayde he thus to Palamon the knyght
I trowe there nedith litel sermonynge
To make you assent to this thinge
Cometh hithir & takith your lady by the honde
And thus of hem bothe was made the bonde
That highte matrimony or mariage
By al the counsel of the Cuntrey
And thus with al blis and melodye
Hath Palamon wedded Emelye

And god that al this worlde hath wrought
Sende hym his loue that he dere hath bought
For nold is Palamon in alle wele
Lyuynge in blis in riches and in hele
And Emely hym loueth so tenderly
And he here seruith so gentilly
That ther was no word hem bitwene
Of ielousie or of ony othir tene
Thus endith Palamon and Emelye
And god saue al this companye

Here endith the knyghtis tale.

And begynneth the Millers prologe.

Whan that ỳ knight had thus his tale told
In al the companye nas ther yong ne old
That he ne sayde it was a noble story
And worthy to be drawe in memory
And namely the gentilis euerichon
Our hoost lowgh and swore so mot I goon
Thus vnbokelid wel is the male
Let se nold who shal telle another tale
For trewly the game is wel begonne
Nold telle ye sir monk yf that ye konne
Som what to quyte with the knyght his tale
The Millward that forwronkyn was al pale
So that vnnethis vp on is hors he sat
He nolde auale nother hood ne hat
Ne abyde no man for his curtesye
But in Pilatis vois he gan crye
And swore he armys bloody and bones

I am ay nobil tale ſothe nonys
The whiche I wol now quyte the knyghtis tale
Our oſt ſaid that he was dronke of ale
And ſayde abyde Robyn leue brothir
Sum bettir may chal telle firſt anothir
Abyde let vs worke thriftely
Be wittis ſoule quod he that nyl not I
For I wil ſpeke or elis go my wey
Our hooſt anſwerd tel on a deuyl wey
Thou art a fool thy witte is ouercome
Now herkeneth quod the myllere alle & ſome
But firſt I make a proteſtacion
That I am dronke I knowe be my ſoun
And therfore yf I aught mys ſpeke or ſay
Wite it the ale of Southwerk I you pray
For I wol telle a legende and a lyf
Bothe of a Carpenter and of his wif
How that the clerk hath ſet the wrightis cappe
The reue anſwerd and ſayde ſtynt thy clappe
Let be thy lewd dronkyn harlottrye
It is ſynne and eke greet folye
To appeire ony man or hym defame
And eke bryngе wyuys in ſuche a name
Thow maiſt I nowgh of othir thyngis ſayn
This dronkyn Miller gan ſpak ful ſone agayn
And ſayde leue brothir Oſwold
Who hath no wyf he is no cokeold
But I ſey not therfore that thou art oon
Ther bith gode wyuys many oon

Why art thou angri with my tale now
I haue a wyf parde as wel as thou
Yet nolde I not for the oxen in my plow
Take vp on me more than ynow
And deme of my self that I were one
I wol beleue that I am none
An husbond shold not be inquisityf
Of goddis priuitees ne of his wyf
So he may fynde goddis fusyon there
Of the vermenaunt nedith not to enquere
What shold I more say but this Millere
He nolde his wordy for nomay forbere
But told his churlis tale in his manere
Me ouer thynketh that I shal reherse it here
And therfore euery gentyl wight I pray
Demeth not for goddis loue that I say
Not for eurl entent but that I moste reherce
Here talis al be they better or werse
Or elles falsen som of my matere
And therfore who so listith not to here
Turne ouer the leef and chees another tale
For he shal fynde ynowe both grete and smale
Of historial thing that touchith gentilnesse
And eke moralite and holynesse
Blameth not me yf that ye chese amys
The Millere is a churle ye knowe wel this
So is the reue and eke other mo
And harlotrye they told both two
Auysith you and put me out of blame

And ellis men shul not make ernest of game

Here begynneth the Milleres tale.

Whilom ther was dwellyng in Oxenforde
A riche chuf that gestis heode to horde
And of his craft he was a Carpenter
With hym ther was dwellinge a poure scoler
Hadde lernyd art but al his fantasye
Was turnyd for to lerne astrologye
And coude a certeyn of conclusions
To demyn by interrogacions
If that men axed hym certayn houres
Whether they shold haue drought or shoures
Or yf that men axed hym what shulde befalle
Of euery thyng I may not rekene alle
This clerk was clepid hende Nicholas
Of derȝ loue he coude and of solas
And therto he was sly and ful preue
And lyk a mayden meke forto se
A chambir hadde he in that hostelrye
Alone withoute ony companye
Ful fetously I dight with herbis sote
And he hym self was swete as is the wote
Of licorice or of ony Cetewale
His almegeste his bokis grete and smale
His astrologye longinge for his art
His alkegrym stones lay feire apart
On shelues couchid at his beddis hed
His presse yeouered with a sold yng reed
And al aboue ther lay a gay sautere

On whiche he made a nyghtis melodye
So ſwete that al the chambir ronge
And Angelus ad virginem he ſonge
And aftir that he ſonge the kyngis note
Ful ofte̅ tyme̅ was his mery throte
And thus this ſwete clerk his tyme̅ ſpent
Aftir his ſendinge and his went
This Carpenter hadde wedded a newe wyf
Whiche that he louyd more than his lyf
Of .xx.viij. yeer ſhe was of age
Jelous he was and held her narow in cage
For ſhe was wilde and yonge & he was olde
And demed hym ſelf lik to be a Cokewolde
He knew not Caton for his wit was rude
That biddith a man wedde his ſimilitude
Men ſholde wedde aftir hir astate
For youthe and old ley often at debate
But ſithen he was falle̅ in the ſnare
He muſte endure as othir folk his care
As ony wesil her body gent was and ſmal
And therto her kyrtil pynchid with a wal
A ſeynt ſhe werid y harrid al of ſilk
A harmecloth as white as morow mylk
Up on her lendis with ful mony agore
White was her ſmok and browdid al before
And eke behynde on hir coler aboute
Of coleblac ſilk withyme̅ and without
The tapettis of her white voluper
Were of the ſame ſute of the coler

Her sylke brody of sylke and set ful hye
And sykerly she hade a lykerous ye
Ful smale ypulled were her brosses two
And they were brent and blak as any slo
She was more blysful on to se
Than is the nelbe pere gnet tre
And softer than is the bulle of a weder
And by hir girdyl hangeth a purs of leder
Tasselyd with grene and perlyd with latoun
In al this worlde to seke vp and doun
Ther is noman so wyse that coude thenche
So gay a pusselot or so praty a wenche
Ful brighter was she shynynge of her hue
Than in the toure the nobyl forgyd nelbe
But of her song she was as lolde and yery
As any walowe sittynge on the bery
Therto she coude skirpe and make game
As any kidy or calf folowynge his dame
Her mouth was swete as braket or methe
Or hony of appelis leyd on hey or hethe
Wynsynge she was as is a ioly colt
Long as a mast and vpright as a bolt
A broche she bar vp on hir lowe coler
As brody as is the boos of a bolteler
Hir shoon were lacyd on hir leggis hye
She was a prymerolle a pigges nye
For any lordy to lygge in his bedy
Or yet for any goody yeman to wedy
Wolde sire and eft sire so be fyl the cas

That on a day this hendy Nicholas
Fil with this yonge wyf to rage & to pleye
Whylis that her husbond was at Osenye
As clerkis be ful subtil and ful queynt
And pryuely he caughte hir be the queynt
And sayde y wis but yf I haue my wylle
For dery loue of the lemman I spylle
And held here harde be the shank bones
And sayde lemman loue me at onys
Or I wol dye al so god me saue
And she sprong as a colt doth in the traue
And with her hed she brieth faste away
She sayde I wol not kysse the be my fay
Why let be quod she let be Nicholas
Or I wyl crye out and alas
Do wey your hondis for your curtesie
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crye
And spak so fayre & profred hir so fast
That she her loue graunted hym at the last
And swere her oth be sayn̄t Thomas of kent
That she wolde be at his comaundement
Whan that she may her leyser wel espye
Myn husbond is so ful of ielosye
But ye be war wel and be pryue
I wot right wel I am but dede quod she
Ye muste be ful dery as in this caas
Nay there of care I not quod Nicholas
A clerk hadde lowdly beset his whyle
But yf he coude a carpenter begyle

And thus they lyen awaked and y swory
To wayte a tyme as I haue told before
Whan Nicholas hadde do thus euerideel
And thackyd here aboute the lendis wel
He kiste hir swete and took his sawtrye
And pleyde faste and made melodye
Thus fil it thus that to the parish chirche
Cristis owen workis forto werche
This goode wyf went on an holyday
Her forheed shoon as brighte as ony day
So was it washe whan she leet her werk
Nowl was ther of that chirche a parish clerk
The whiche was y clepyd absolon
Crulled was his heer and as the gold it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brood
Ful streyght and euene lay his ioly shode
His rode was reed his yen gray as goos
With powlis wyndowes corueu in his shoos
In hosis reed he went ful fetously
I clad he was ful smal and fetously
In a kirtyl or a litel waget
Ful faire and wel he the poyntis set
And ther vpon he hadde a gay surplis
As white as blosme on the rys
A merry child he was so god me saue
Wel coude he lete blood and eke shaue
And make a chartir of lond & aquytance
In tweny maners coude he trippe & daunce
After the scole of Oxenforde tho

And with his hondis caste he and fro
And pleye songis on a smale vibible
Therto he song sometyme a lowde quyncyble
And wel cowde he play on his gyterne
In al the toun nas hoelde hous ne tauerne
That he ne visited it with his solace
There as ony gaylard tapstere was
But soth to say he was somdel scharpe
Of fartyng and of speche daungerous
This Absolon that ioly was and gay
Goth with a senser on the holy day
Sensinge wyues of the parish fast
And many a louely lokis on hem he cast
And namely on this Carpentares wyf
To lokis on hir hym thoughte a mery lyf
She was so propre swete and eek likerous
I dar wel say yf she had ben a mous
And he a cat he wolde hir hente anon
This parishe clerk this ioly absolon
Hath in his herte suche a loue longynge
That of no wyf takis he non offrynge
For curtesye he sayde he wolde non
The mone whan it was nyght bright shon
And Absolon his giterne hadde I take
For paramours he thoughte forto wake
And forth he goth iolif and amerous
Tyl he cam to the Carpenters hous
A litil aftir cokkis hadde I crowe
And dressed hym vp by-ffyn shot wyndowe

That was vpon the Carpenters wal
He syngith in his nois gentil and smal
Cristis dere lady yf thy wille be
I pray you that ye wil thynke on me
Ful wel acordynge to his gitternynge
This Carpenter herde hym synge
And spak vnto his wyf and sayde anon
What alison herist thou not absolon
That chaumtith thus vnder our bolnis wal
And she answerde her husbonde ther with al
Yes god wot John I here it ewerydel
This passeth forth what wil ye let than wel
From day to day this ioly absolon
So wolweth her that he is wo begon
He walkith al the nyght and al the day
He kembith his lockis brode & maketh hym gay
He wolweth hir be menes of brocage
And swor he wolde be hir owen page
He syngeth brokynge as any nyghtyngale
He sent a fitte pyment methe & spicerey ale
And wafres pypynge hoot out of the glede
And for she was of toun he profrith her mede
For som folk wol loue wommen for richesse
And some for strokis and some for iolynesse
Som tyme he sheweth his lustinesse & maistrie
He pleyeth herodes vp on a stassolé hye
But what auaileth hym as in this caas
She louerth so this hendy Nicholas
That absolon may blowe the buckis horn

He me hadde for his labour but a scorn
And thus she maketh absolon her ape
And al his ernest turneth in to a Jape
Ful soth is this prouerbe it is no lye
Men say alwey the nyght is slye
Maketh oftymes leef for to be loth
For though that absolon were wood or wroth
By cause that he fer was from hir sighte
This nyght Nicholas stoode in his lighte
Now here the wel now hende Nicholas
For Absolon may wayle and synge alas
And so befil that on a saterday
This Carpenter was goon til Osenay
And eke hende Nicholas and alison
Accordid be fully to this conclusion
That Nicholas shal shapen hym a wyle
This sely ielous husbond to begyle
And yf so be the game went a right
She sholde slepe in his armys al nyght
For this was her desire and his also
And right anon with out wordis mo
This Nicholas no lenger wolde tary
But doith ful softe in to his chambir carye
Bothe mete and drynke for a day or tweye
And to her husbond bad her forto seye
Yf that he axed after Nicholas
She sholde say she nyste where he was
Of al that day she sawe hym not with ye
She trowed that he is in sorwe maladye

For that no cry her mayde myghte hym calle
He nolde answer for no thinge myghte falle
This passith forth al that saterday
That Nicholas stille in his chambir lay
And eet or slepe or dede What hym list
Tyl sonday that the sonne goth to rest
This sely Carpenter hath gret meruayl
Of Nicholas or What hym myghte ayl
And sayde I am adrede be seint Thomas
It stondith not aright With Nicholas
Got shilde that he deyde sodenly
This Worlde is nolde ful tikyl sikirly
I salle a corps to day bore to chirche
That nolde amonday last I say hym Wirche
Go vp quod he vnto his knaue anon
Clepe at the dore or knocke With a ston
Loke how it is and tel me holdely
This knaue goth hym vp ful sturdely
And at the chambir dore Whil that he stody
He cryde and knokked as he were Wody
What how What dost how Maistir Nicholay
How may ye slepen al the longe day
But al for nought he herde not a Word
An hool ful lolle he stondy vp on a borde
There as the cat Was Wont yn for to crepe
And at the hole he loked yn ful depe
Tyl at the last he hadde of hym a sighte
This Nicholas lay gapyng ayre vpright
As he hadde loked on the nelh mone

Adoun he goth and tellith his maister sone
In what array he salb this ilke may
This Carpenter to blisse hym began
And sayde help vs saint frideswyde
A man woot litil what hym shal betyde
This may is falle with his astronomye
In soun woodnesse or in sum agonye
I thoughte ay wel how it sholde be
Men sholde not knowe of goddis priuyte
I blissed be alwey alday may
That nought but only his beleue ay
So ferd another clerk with astronomye
He walked in the feldis forto prye
Upon the sterres what ther sholde be falle
Tyl he was in a marlepit y falle
He sab not that but yet be saint Thomas
Me reweth sore of hend Nicholas
He shal be ratyd of his studyenge
If that I may be Jhesu heuyn kynge
Gete me a staf that I may vnderspore
Whyle that thou Robyn heuyst of the dore
He shal out of this studyenge as I gesse
And to the chambir dore he gan hym dresse
His knaue was a strong chorle for the nonys
And by the hasp he haf it vp at onys
Into the floor the dore fyl anon
This Nicholas sat as stille as ony ston
And ayr gaped vpward in the eyr
This Carpenter wende that he hadde be in despeyr

And hente hym be the sholdris mightely
And shook hym herde and cryde spetously
What Nicholay What how lokie adoun
Awake and thynk on cristis passion
I crouche the fro elfys and fro wightis
Therwith the nyghtspel sayde he anon rightis
On four halyys on the hous aboute
And on the thressholde & on the dore without
Jhesu crist and seynt Benedight
Blisse this hous from euery wicked wyght
For nyghtis werry the wight pater noster
Where wonnest thou saint Petris suster
And at the laste this hendy Nicholas
Gan for to sighe sore and sayde alas
Shal al the worlde be lost eftsones now
This carpenter answerde What sayst thou now
What thynk on gode as we do mery that swynke
This Nicholas answerde fette me drynke
And aftir wil y spekie in to the priuyte
Of certayn thingis that touchen me and the
I wil it telle the & non othir may certayn
This carpenter goth doun & comyth agayn
And broughte of mighty ale alarge quart
And when eche of hem hadde dronke his part
This Nicholas his dore faste shette
And doun the carpenter be hym he sette
He sayde Jolhy myn hoost leue and dere
Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight thou shalt this counsel wrey

For it is cristis counsel that y sey
And yf thou telle it may thou art forlore
For this trespeasnce thou shalt haue therfore
That yf thou werye me thou shalt be wood
May crist forbede it for his herry blood
Quod tho this sely man I am no blabbe
Me thogh I say I am not leef to gabbe
Say what thou wilt I shal it neuyr telle
To child ne wyf be hym that harmed helle
Now John quod Nicholas I wyl not lye
I haue founde hit in myn astrologye
As I haue loked in the mone bright
That now a monday next at quartir nyght
Shal falle a rayn and that so wylde & wood
That half so gret was neuer noes flood
This worlde he sayde in lesse than an hour
Shal al be dreynt so hidous is the shour
Thus shal mankynde drenche and lese her lif
This Carpenter answerd allas my wyf
And shal she drenche alas my alisoun
For sorow of this he fyl almust adoun
And sayde is ther no remedy in this caas
Yes forgod quod hendy Nicholas
Yf thou wilt worke after lore and rede
Thou mayst not worke after thyn owen hede
For this sayth Salamon that was ful trewe
Worke al be counsel and thou shalt not rewe
And yf thou worke wilt be good counsel
I vndirtake without mast or sayl

Yet ſhal I ſaue here and the and me
Haſt thou not herd how was Noe
Whan that our lorde hadde warned hym before
That al the worlde with water ſholde be lore
Yes quod this carpenter ful yore ago
Haſt thou not herd quod Nicholas alſo
The ſorwe of Noe with his felefhip
Or that he myghte gete his wyf to ſhip
Hym hadde leuer I dar wel vndertake
At that tyme than alle his wetheris blake
That ſhe hadde had a ſhip her ſelf alone
And therfore wotiſt thou what is beſt to done
This aſkith haſte and of ay haſti thing
May men not preche ne make tarying
Anon go gete vs faſte in to this in
A kneding trough or ellis a kemelyn
For eche of vs but loke that they be large
In whiche we mowe ſwymmen as in a barge
And haue therynne vitayl ſufficiaunt
But for o day fy on the remenaunt
The water ſhal a ſlake and go away
Aboute prime vp on the nexte day
But wilyn may not wite of this thy knaue
Ne eke thy mayden gille I may not ſaue
Axe not why for though thou aſke me
I wil not telle goddis priuete
It ſuffiſith the but yf thy wit be mad
To haue as grete a grace as Noe had
Thy wyf ſhal I wel ſaue out of doute

So wolde thy wey and speedy the here aboute
But whan tholde hast for the and her and me
Y gotery thyse knedynge tubbis thre
Thay shalt thou honge hem in the roof ful hye
That nomay of our pryuyte aspye
And whan thou thus hast don as J haue seyde
And hast our vitayl sayre in hem y leyde
And eke and aye to smyte the corde a two
Whan that the watir cometh that we may go
And breke ay hool ay high vpon the gabyl
Into the garderyn wardy ouer the stabyl
That we may freely passe forth our way
Whan that the grete shour is passid away
Thay shul we swymme as merily J vndertake
As doth the whyte doke after the drake
Thay wyl J clepe holde alison holde John
Be mery for the flood wyl passe anon
And tholde wilt say hayl maister Nicholay
Gode morowe J se the wel for it is day
And thay shal we be lordis al our lif
Of al the worlde as Noe and his wyf
But of o thing J warne the ful right
Be wel auisyd on that ilke nyght
Whey we be entred in to the shyp hordy
That none of vs speke no word
Ne clepe ne crye but be in his prayere
For it is goddis owen hest dere
Thy wyf and tholde must hange fer a two
For that techyng you shal be no syme

Moneye in lokynge thay ther shal in dede
This ordenaunce is do O godys the spede
To morold at nyght When folk be alle a slepe
Into our kneedynge tubbis Wyl We crepe
And sittyn there abydynge goddis grace
So nold thy Wey and haue ne lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermonynge
Mey sey thus sendy the Wyse & say no thinge
Thou art so Wyse it nedith the not to teche
Gody saue our lif and I the beseche
This sely Carpenter goth forth his Weye
And to nomay Wolde he hit bewreye
But to his Wyf he tolde this priuyte
And she Was Waar and knew it bet thay he
What al this queynte caste Was for to seye
But natheles she ferde as she Wolde deye
And sayde alas go forth thy Wey anoy
Help vs to scape or We be dedy echone
I am thy trewe Weddidy Wyf
So dere spouse and help to saue our lyf
Lo Whiche a gret thinge is affection
Mey may dye al day of ymagynacion
So depe may impression be take
This sely Carpenter begynneth to quake
Hym thynketh verily that he may se
Noes floody come Walowynge as the se
To drenchey alisoy his hony dere
He Wepith Waylith and maketh sory chere
He sighedy With many a sory Wongh

He goeth and getith hym a knedyng trough
And after that a tub and a kemelyng
And preuely he sent hem to his in
And hengy hem in the roof in peyntyng
With his owen hondy he made ladders thre
To clymben be the rengis and the stalkis
Into the tubbis hangyng in the balkis
And hem vitaylith both trough and tub
With breed and chese & good ale in a Jub
Suffising right J nold as for o day
But or that he hadde maad al that aray
He sente his knaue and eke his wenche also
Op on his erond to london forto goo
And on the sonday when it dwelt to nyght
He shitte his dore without candel light
And dressith al thing as it sholde be
And shortly vp they clomben alle thre
They sittyn stille wel a furlong waye
Nold pater noster clum sayde Nicholaye
And clum sayde John and clum sayde alison
This Carpenter sayde his deuocion
And stylle he sittith and biddith his praiere
Awaytyng on the rayn yf he it here
The dede sleep for verry weryneese
Hyl on this Carpenter right as J gesse
Aboute curfu tyme or litil more
For traueyl of his gost he groneth sore
And eft he wold for his hed mys lay
Doun of the ladder stalkith Nicholay

And alisoun ful softe doun she spredde
Withoute wordes mo they go to bedde
Eche gan other in armes plye
There was the reuel and the melodye
And thus lieth alisoun and Nicholas
In besines of myrthe and solas
Tyl that the belle of laudes gan to ringe
And freris in the chaunsel gan to singe
This parish clerk this absolon
That is for loue alwey so wo be gon
Up on the monday was at Oseney
With a compunye hym to disport and pley
And asked vpon a caas a cloisterer
Ful preuely after John the Carpenter
And he drew hym apart out of the chirche
And sayde I not I shal hym here not wirche
Sith saterday I trowe that he be went
For tymbir that our abbot hath hym sent
For he is wont for tymbir for to go
And dwelle at the graunge a day or two
Or elles he is at his hous certeyn
Where that he be I can not sothly sayn
This absolon ful ioly was and light
And thoughte now is tyme to wake al nyght
For sikirly I saw hym not sterynge
Aboute his dore sin day gan to springe
So mote I thryue I shal or cockis crowe
Prively knocken at his windowe
That stont ful lowe vpon his bolsters wal

To alisoy nolde wol I telley al
My loue longynge for yet I shal not mys
That at the leste wey I shal her kys
Some maner comfort shal I haue ystay
My mouth hath itched al this longe day
That is a signe of kissynge at the leste
Al nyght y mette eke that I was at a feste
Therfore y wyl go slepe an hour or tweye
And al the nyght than wyl I walke & pleye
Whan that the firste cok hath crowe anoy
Up risith this ioly louer absolon
And hym arrayeth gay at poynt deuyse
But first he chewith grayn and licorys
To smelley swete or he hadde kempt his heer
Under his tongy a trew loue he beer
For therby wende he to haue be gracious
He cometh to the Carpenteres hous
And stille he stont vnder the shot wyndow
Unto his breest it raught it was so lowe
And softe he knocketh with a sempsoriy
What do ye honycombe swete alsoy
My feyre birde my swete cynamome
Awaketh lemmay ony and spekte tome
Ful litel thynke ye vp on my woo
That for your loue y swete there I goo
No wonder is though I swelte and swete
I morne as doth a lamb after the tete
Wyf lemmay y haue suche loue longynge
That lik a turtil trewe is my mornynge

I may not ete nomore than amayde
Go fro the wyndowe Jacke fool she sayde
As helpe me god it wol not be comblame
I loue another and elles y were to blame
Wel bet than the be Jhesu absolon
Go forth thy wey or I wol throwe a stoon
And let me slepe a twenty deuyl wey
Allas quod absolon and wel a wey
That trewe loue was euyr cruel be set
Than kis me syn it may be no let
For Jhesus loue and for the loue of me
Wilt thou than go thy wey there with qd she
Ye certis lemman quod this absolon
Than make the redy quod she I come anon
And vnto Nicholas she sayde stille
Now pees and thou shalt laughe al thy fille
This absolon down set hym on his knees
And sayde y am a lordy at al degrees
For after this y hope ther comyth more
Lemman thy grace and swete bryd thyn ore
The wyndowes she vndoth and that in haste
Haue do quod she com of and spede the faste
Lest that our neyghebours the a spye
This absolon gan wype his mouth ful drye
Derk was the nyght as pich or cole
And at the wyndowe she put out her hole
And absolon hym felte ne bet ne wers
But with his mouth he kist her ers
Ful sauerly or he were war of this

Whan he stert and thoughte it was amys
For wel wyste he a wommay hadde no berd
He felte a thyng al rough and long yerd
And sayde fy alas what haue y do
Tehe quod she and clappid the wyndow to
And Absolon goth forth a sory pas
A berd a berd quod hendy Nicholas
By goddis corpus this goth fair and wel
This sely absolon herde every del
And on his lippe he gan for angir byte
And to hym self he sayde I shal the quyte
Who rubbith now who frotith now his lippis
With dust with cloth with sondy with chippis
But Absolon that saith ful ofte alas
My soule betake I sayde he to sathanas
But me were leuyr than al this toun quod he
On this despit wroken yworth be
Alas quod he alas that I ne hadde blent
His hoot loue was cold and al queynt
For fro that tyme that he hadde kist her ars
Of paramours set he not a ars
For he was helid of his maladye
Ful ofte paramours gan he diffye
And weyte as doth a child that is bete
A softe pas he wente hym ouer the strete
Vnto a smyth men cally dane Gerueys
That in his forge smytith plow harneys
He sharpith the share and the coltre bisely
This Absolon knockith al esely

Of al this pley agayn no word he yaf
He hadde more to wib on his distaf
Thay geruais knelb and saide frendy so derr
That hoot cultre in the chymney herr
As lene it me I haue therwith to woon
And I wol bringe it the agayn ful soone
Geruais answerd certis were it goldy
Or in a pokr noblis al vntoldy
Thou sholdest it haue as I am trewb smyth
Ey cristis foot what wil ye do ther with
Therfore quod absolon be as be may
I shal wel telle it the to morwb or day
And caughte the cultre be the coldy steele
Ful softe out of the dore he gan stele
And wente vnto the Carpenteris wal
He coughed first and kmokked therwith al
Vp on the wyndowb right as he didy eer
This alison answerd who is there
That knockith so y warant it a thef
Why nay quod he god wot my swete lef
I am absolon thy owne derlinge
Of goldy quod he I haue the brought a ryngy
My moder yaf it me so godi me saue
Ful fyn it is and therto wel I graue
This wol y gyue the yf thou me kysse
This Nicholas was risen forto pysse
And thoughte he wolde amende al the iape
He sholde kisse his ers or that he scape
And vp the wyndowb dede he hastely

And out his ars he puttith pryuely
Ouer the buttok to the shank boon
And therwith spak this clerk Absolon
Spek swete bryd I not where thou art
This Nicholas anoy let fle a fart
As gret as it had be a thonder dynt
That with the strook he was almost yblynt
And he was redy with his yren hoot
And Nicholas amyd the ers he smoot
Of goth the skyn an hond brede aboute
The hoote cultre brende so his toute
And for the smert he wende forto dye
As he were wood for wo he gan crye
Help water water help for goddis herte
This Carpenter out of his slombir sterte
And herde one crye water as he were wood
And thoughte allas now comyth the flood
He set hym up without wordis mo
And with his axe he smoot the corde a two
And doun goth al he fond neyther to selle
Ne breed ne ale tyl he com to the selle
Up on the floor and there a swoun he lay
Up stert alisoun and Nicholay
And cryde out and haroud in the strete
The neyghebours both smale and grete
In commyn forto gadryn on this may
That yet a swoun lay both pale and wan
For with the fal broste hath he his arme
But stonde he moste vnto his owhen harm

For whan he spak he was anon bore doun
With hende Nicholas and alisoun
They bolde euery man that he was wood
So he was agast of Noes flood
Thorwh fantesye that of his vanite
He hadde bought hym kneding tubbis thre
And hadde hem hanged in the wof aboue
And that he prayde hem for goddis loue
To sitten in the wof per companye
The folk gan laughen at his fantesye
In to the wof they klyben and they gape
And turned al his harm in to a iape
For what so euer this carpenter answerd
It was for nought no man his reson herde
With othis grete he was sworn adoun
That he was holde wood in al the toun
For euery clerk right anon held with hother
They sayde the man was wood my leue brother
And euery wight gan laughe at this strif
Thus swyued was the carpenteris wyf
For al his kepynge and al his Jelosye
And absolon hath kissed her nethir ye
And Nicholas is scalded in the toute
This tale is doon and god saue al the route

Here endeth the Milleres tale.

And here begynneth the Reues prologe.

My folk hadde laughyn at this nyce caas
Of absolon and of hende Nicholas
Diuers folk diuersly they sayden

But for the more part they laughte & pleyden
At this tale y saw noman hym greue
But yf it were only Osewold the reue
Be cause he was of Carpenteris craft
A litil yre is in his herte y laft
He gan to grutche and blame it a lyte
Si the quod he ful wel I coude the quyte
With bleryng of a proudy Mylleres ye
Yf that me list to speke of Pleintee
But y am olde me list not to pleye for age
Gras tyme is doon my foder is forage
This whyte top writith my olde yeris
Myn herte also mouldy is as myn heer is
But yf I fare as doth an open ers
That ilke fruyt is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotyn in mul'ok or in stre
We olde men I drede so fare we
Tyl we be rotyn can we not be ripe
We hoppyn alwey whyle the worlde wol pype
For in our wyl ther stikith euer a nayl
To haue an hoore heed and a grene tayl
As hath a leek for though our myght be gon
Our wil desirith fully euer in one
For whan we may nought do than wol we spekyn
Yet in our coldy asshen oldy fyre is rekyn
Four gledis haue we whiche I shal deuyse
Auauntyng lyenge anger and couetyse
Thyse four sparkelis longith vnto eldy
Our olde lymys mowe we not be weldy

But Wil ſhal not ſayle that is ſoth
Andy yet haue I alWey a colt is toth
As many a yeer as it is paſſed heme
Sey that my tappe of lif began to reme
For ſikirly Whan I Was born anone
Deth dreW the tappe of lif andy let it goon
Andy euer ſeth hath ſo the tappe wonne
Tyl that almoſt al empty is the tonne
The ſtreme of lif noW droppith on the chymbe
The ſely tunge may Wel ryngе andy chymbe
Of Wreſthidneſſe that paſt is ful yore
With olde folk ſaue dotage ther is nomore
Whan that our hooſt had herdy this ſermonyng
He gan to ſpeken as lordly as a kyng
Andy ſayde What amountith al this Wit
What ſhul We ſpeke alday of holy Writ
The deuel made a reue for to preche
Or of a ſolWter a ſhipman or a leche
Say forth thy tale andy tary not the tyme
Lo depfordy it is halfWey to pryme
Lo grenelWich that many a ſhrelWe is ynne
It Were al tyme thy tale for to begynne
Now ſires quod I ſWoldy the reue
I pray you alle that ye yoW not greue
Though that y anſWere a ſomdel ſette his houy
For leful is With force force to foldy
This dronkyn myllere hath toldy vs here
How that begildy Was a maiſter carpentere
Parauenture in ſcorn for that I any one

And be your leue I shal hym quyte anon
Right in his churlis termys wel I spelle
I pray to god his necke mote be to brelle
He can wel in myn ye se a stalke
But in his owen he can not se a balke

Here endeth the Reues prologe.

And here begynneth his tale.

At trumpyngton not fer fro Cambrige
Ther goth a brook and ouer that a brige
Vpon the whiche brook ther stondith a mylle
And this is verey soth that I you telle
A myller was ther dwellyng many a day
As any pecok he was proud and gay
Pipe he coude and fisshe and nettis bete
And turne cuppis and wel wrastil and lepe
And by his belt he bar a long pauade
And of a swerd ful trenchant was the blade
A ioly popper bar he in his pouche
Ther was noman for peril durste hym touche
A sheffeld thwytel bare he in his hose
Round was his face & camoysid was his nose
Also pilled as an ape was his skulle
He was a market beter at the fulle
Ther durste no wight hond vpon hym legge
That he ne swoor anon he shulde abegge
A theef he was for sothe of corn and mele
And that a sligh and vsant for to stele
His name was John denus Symkyn
A wyf he hadde come of noble kyn

The person of the town hir fader was
With heve he yaf many a-pinte of thas
For that Symkyn sholde in his bloody alye
She was sostrid in a Monnerye
For Symkyn wolde no wyse as he sayde
But yf she were wel y norissh̄id and amayde
To saue his astat of yemanrye
And she was proudy and pert as a pye
A ful feir sight was vp on hem tvo
On holiday before hir wolde he go
With his tipet ybounde aboute his hed
And she cam after in a gite of reed
And Symkyn hadde hosen of the same
Ther durste no wight clepe hir but dame
Was noon so hardy that wente he the way
That with hir durste onys rage or play
But yf he wolde be slayn of Symkyn
With pauade or with knyf or bodekyn
For ielous folk ben perlous euermo
Algatis they wolde her wyues wenten so
And eke also for she was somdele smotirlich
She was as dyne as water in a dich
And ful of hoour as a pismire
Hem thoughte a lady sholde hir spare
What for hir kynrede and hir norture
That she hadde lerned in the Monerye
Atoughtir hadde they betwix hem tvo
Of twenty yeer withoute ony mo
Sauynge a child that was of half yeer age

In a dyk it lay and was a proper page
This bonche thicke and wel I gowde was
With camoys nose and yey grey as glas
Buttoltlis hode and bretes rounde & hye
But right fair was her heer I wyl nót lye
The parsoy of the toun for she was seye
In purpos was to make hir his heye
Goeth of his catell and of his mesuage
And straunge he made it of hir mariage
His purpos was to bestowe here hye
Unto sum worthy blood of auncetrye
For holy chirche godes muste be spendid
Oy holy chirche blood that is descendid
Therfore he wolde his holy blood honoure
Though that holy chirche sholde devoure
Gret soliyn hade this myller out of doute
With whete and malt of al the lond about
And namely ther was a gret Colege
Mey clepith it the soler halle of Cambregge
There was her whete & eke hir malt I gawnde
And oy a day it happed in a stounde
Sek lay the Maunciple on a malady
Mey wenden wisly that he sholde dy
Fro whom this Millers stale both whete & corn
An hundrid tyme more than he did beforn
For there before he stal but curteisly
But now he was a theef ful outrageously
For whiche the wardeyn chidde & made fare
But therof set this Millere nót a tare

He makith hoste and sayde it was not so
Thay were ther pore clerkis tho
That dueldyn in this halle of whiche I sey
Testyf they were and lusty for to ply
And only for hir mysthe and reuelrye
Up on the wardeyn bisily they crye
To yeue hem leue but a litil stounde
To go to the mylle & se her corn y grounde
And hardely they durste ley her necke
The myllere sholde not stele half a pecke
Of corn be sleyghte or by force hem tene
And at the laste the wardeyn yaf hem leue
John highte that on & aleyn highte that other
Of a toun were they born that highte strodir
Fer in the north I can not telle where
They makyn redy al hir owen gere
And on her hors the sackis cast anon
Forth goth aleyn the clerk and eke John
With good sword and bokeler by her syde
John knew the wey hym nedith no gyde
And at the mylle the sak adown he laith
Aleyn spak first al hayl Symond in feith
Wel farith thy faire doughter and thy wyf
Aleyn welcome quod Symkyn be my lyf
And John also what how what do ye here
Symond quod he by god nede hath no pere
Hym hus serue hym self that has no swayn
Or ellis he is a fool as clerkis sayn
Our marncâpyl I hope he wol be redy

Alla Workis ay there Wangis in his hedy
Andy therfore J is come andy this aleyn
To grynde our corn andy cary it agayn
J pray you spede vs heyn in that ye may
Jt shal be do quod Symkyn be my fay
What Wil ye do Whylis it is in hondy
Be gody right be the hoper Wol J stondy
Quod Johy andy se holb the corn goos yn
Yet salb J nayr be my fadir kyn
Holb the hoper Waggis to andy fro
Aleyn answerdy Johy Wolt thou so
Thay Wol y be benethe by my crouny
Andy se hon the mele fallis adouny
Jn to the trowgh that shal be my disport
For Johy in faith J may be of your sort
Ay is as ille a Mylleve as is ye
This myller smyledy of her nyete
Andy thoughte al this is doy but for a Wyle
Thay Were that nomay may hem begyle
But be my thrifte yet shal J blere her ye
For al her sleyghte andy her philosophye
The moze queynte crekis that they make
The more shal J stele Whay J take
Jn stede of flour yet Wyl J yeue hem hay
The grettist clerkis be not Wisest mey
As Whilom the Wolf spak to the mare
Of al her art ne counte J not a tare
Out at the dore he goth ful pryuely
Wher that he salb his tyme softly

He lokith vp and doun til he hath founde
Thise clerkis hors where they stoode bounde
Behynde the mylle vnder a leeffeel
And to the hors he goth faire and wel
He stripith of the bridyl right anon
And when the hors were loos they gan gon
Toward the feldy where wilde maris renne
Forth with with wehy thurgh thicke & thynne
This mylleve goth ayen no word he seyde
But doth his note & with the clerkis pleyde
Til that her corn was feire & wel grounde
And when the mele is sacked and bounde
This John goth forth & fynt his hors a weye
And gan to crye haw & wel a wey
Our hors is lorn aleyn for colkys harnys
Stap out on thy feet com themys at anys
Allas our wardeyn hath his palfrey lorn
This aleyn al forgat both mele and corn
All was oute of mynde his husbondry
What whilk wey is he gon he gan crye
The wyf com rennynge vnto hardy at a renne
She said allas your hors goth to fenne
With wilde maris. as faste as he may go
Vnthank come on his hand that bond hem so
And he that bettir shold haue knyt the reyne
Allas quod John allas for cristis peyne
Ley doun thy swerd and I wil myn also
I is ful swift. god wot as is a roo
The cockis herte he shal not a scape vs bothe

Alla Warkis ay there Wangis in his hedy
Andy therfore I is come andy this aleyy
To gryndе our corny andy carry it agayn
I pray you spede hs heyy in that ye may
It shal be do quod Symkyn be my fay
What Wil ye do Whylis it is in hondy
Be gody right be the hoper Wol I stondy
Quod Johy andy se how the cory goos yy
Yet sall I nayr be my fadir kyy
How the hoper Waggis to andy fro
Aleyy answerdy Johy Wolt thou so
Thay Wol y be kenethe by my crouy
Andy se hon the mele fallis adouy
In to the trowgh that shal be my disport
For Johy in faith I may be of your sort
Ay is as ille a Mylleve as is ye
This myller smyledy of her nyсete
Andy thoughte al this is doy but for a Wyle
Thay Were that nomay may hem begyle
But be my thrifte yet shal I bleve her ye
For al her sleyghte andy her philosophye
The more queynte ceftis that they make
The more shal I stele Whay I take
In stede of flour yet Wyl I yeue hem bren
The grettist clerkis be not Wisest men
As Whilom the Wolf spake to the mare
Of al her art ne counte I not a tare
Out at the dore he goth ful pryuely
Whey that he sall his tyme softly

He lokith vp and doun til he hath founde
Thise clerkis hors where they stoode bounde
Behynde the mylle vnder a leeffeel
And to the hors he goth faire and wel
He stripith of the bridyl right anoon
And when the hors were loos they gan goon
Toward the feld where wilde maris renne
Forth with with wehy thurgh thicke & thynne
This mylleere goth ayen no word he seyde
But doth his note & with the clerkis pleyde
Til that her corn was feire & wel grounde
And when the mele is sackid and bounde
This John goth forth & fynt his hors a weye
And gan to crye haw & wel a wey
Our hors is lorn aleyn for colkilys binys
Step out on thy feet com themys at anys
Allas our wardeyn hath his palfrey lorn
This aleyn al forgat bothe mele and corn
All was oute of mynde his husbondry
What whilk wey is he gon he gan crye
The wyf com rennynge ynward at a renne
She said allas your hors goth to renne
With wilde maris. as faste as he may go
Unthank come on his hand that bond hem so
And he that better sholde haue kept the reyne
Allas quod John allas for cristis peyne
Ley doun thy swerd and I wil myn also
I is ful swift, god woot as is a roo
Be cockis herte he shal not a scape vs bothe

Why ne had thou put the capyl in to the lathe
Ille hayl be good alayn thou is a fonne
These seke clerkis haue wel faste y wonne
Toward the fenne bothe alayn and elle John
And when the Mylleve sawe they were gon
He half a bussthel of her corn hath take
And bad his wyf go knede it in a cake
And sayde I trowe the clerkis were a ferd
Yet can a Mylleve make a clerkis herd
For al her art yet let hem go her wey
Lo where they goon so lat the children pley
They gete hem nought so lightly be my crown
Thyse seke clerkis wemmyn vp and down
With kepe kepe stond stond Jossa ware devere
Ga whistle thou there and I shal kepe hym here
But shortly til it was verily nyght
They coude not though they dede al her myght
Her capil cache he ran alwey so faste
Tyl in a diche they caughte hym at the laste
Wery and wet as beste is in the rayn
Comyth seke John and with hym alayn
Allas quod John the day that I was borv
Moste we dryuen to nething and to scorn
Our corn is stole men wyl vs folis calle
Bothe the wardeyn and our felowis alle
And namely the Myller wel a wey
Thus pleyneth John as he goth be the wey
Toward the Mylle and bayard in his hond
The Myller sittyng be the fyre he fond

For it was nyghe & ferther myghte they nought
But for the loue of god they hym besought
Of herbewth and of ese as for hir peny
The myller sayde agayn yf ther be eny
Suche as hit is yet shulle ye haue your part
Myn hous is strait but ye haue lernyd art
Ye can be argumentis makey a place
A myle brood of twenty foot of space
Let se now yf this place wol suffise
Or make it wmer with speche as is your gise
Now Symond saide this John be saint Cutbert
Ay is thow mery and that is wel answerd
I haue herd say ỹ men shal take of twa thingis
Skilk as be fyndis or skilk as be bringis
But specially y pray the host so dere
Sete vs som mete & drinke & make vs chere
And we wol trewly at the fulle
With empti hondis men may not halbis aulle
Lo here my siluer redy forto spende
This myller to the toun his doughter sende
For ale and breed and rostid hen a goos
And bond her hors that he shold nomore go loos
And in his olden chamber he made a bed
With shetes & with chalous faire I spred
Not from his olden bed ten foot or twelue
His doughter hadde a bed al be her selue
Right in the same chambir by and by
It myghte be no let the cause why
Ther was no wmer herberwd in the place

They soupen and spekyn of solace
And dronkyn ayr strong ale atte beste
Aboute mydnyght wente they to reste
Wel hath this Myller sternysshed his hed
Ful pale he was for dronke and nat red
He yexith and he spekith thorwh the nose
As he were on the quacke or on the pose
To bedde he goth and with hym goth his wyf
As ony Jay was she light and iolyf
So was her ioly whistyl wel y wet
The cradyl at here beddis syde was set
To rocken and to yeue the childe sowke
And when that dawkyn was in the crowke
To bedde wente the doughter right anone
To bedde goth aleyn and also John
Ther is nomore ther nedith hem no dwale
This Myller hath so wysely bibbed ale
That as an hors he snorteth and sleepe
Ne of his tayl behynde he taketh no kepe
His wyf bare hym a burdon ful strong
Men myghte hem here rowtyng a furlong
The wenche rowted eke par compayny
Aleyn the clerk that herde this melody
He poked John and sayde slepist thow
Herdist thou ayr slyke a song or now
Lo whilk a complyn is atwinne hem alle
A wylde fyre on her bodyys falle
Who herde ayr swylk a ferly thing
Ye they shal haue the flour of yll endyng

This longe nyghe ther hyd̄ vs no reste
But yet nofozce al ſhal be foz the beſte
Foz Joh̄y ſayde aleyn al ſo mot J thryue
If that J may ye wenche wol J ſwyue
Sony eſement hath lalbe ſhapen vs
Foz Joh̄y ther is a lalbe that ſaith thus
That yf a man in o thinḡ be agreued
That in a nothir he ſhal be releued
Our cozn is ſtole ſothly hit is no nay
And̄ we haue had̄ an anyl fytte to day
And̄ ſyn J ſhal haue non amendement
Ageyns my loſſe J wol haue eſement
Be goddis ſale it ſhal non othir be
This Joh̄y anſwerd̄ aleyn auyſe the
The myllere is a perlous man he ſeyde
And̄ yf that he out of his ſlepe abreyde
He myghte do vs bathe a felony
Aleyn anſwerd̄ J counte hym not a flye
And̄ vp he riſt and̄ to the wenche he creep
This wenche lay vpright and̄ faſt ſleep
Til he ſo ny was oz the myghte aſpye
That it hadde be to late foz to crye
And̄ ſhortly forto telle they were attone
Nowe playe aleyn foz J wil ſpeke of Joh̄y
This Joh̄y lith ſtille a furlong wey oz two
And̄ to hym ſelf he made gret woo
Allas quod he this is a wickyd̄ Jape
Now may J ſay that J is but an ape
Yet hath my felow̄ ſom what foz his harm

He hath the Millars doughter in his arme
He auntrid and his nedis spedde
And I ly as a deaf salt in my bedde
And when this Jape is told another day
I shal be holde a daffe a coltenay
I wyl a ryse and aunbre me be my feyth
Unhardy vnsely thus men seyth
And vp he roos and softly he went
Unto the cradyl and in his arm it hent
An bare it softe vnto his beddis feet
Sone aftir the wyf hir wolbeynd leet
And gan awake and wente hir out to pisse
And cam ayen and gan her cradyl mysse
And gropid here & there but she fond non
Allas quod she I hadde almost mysgon
I hadde almost goon to the clerkis bed
Do wey benedicite than hadde I foule sped
And forth she goth til she the cradyl fond
She gropith alwey ferther with her hond
And fond the bed & thought nought but good
Be cause that the Cradyl be it stood
And nyste neuer where she was for it was derk
But fayr & wel she crepte vnto the clerk
And lith ful stille & wolde haue caught a sleep
With ynne a whyle this John vp leep
And on this good wyf he leyeth on sore
So mery a fytte hadde not she ful yore
He pryketh harde and sore as he were mad
This ioly lyf haue thyse two clerkis lad

Tyl that the thrydde cok began to synge
Alayn wept wery in the dalbnynge
For he hadde swonken al the longe nyght
And sayde fayr wel my fayr swete wight
The day is come I may no lenger byde
Yet euermore where so y go or ryde
I am thyn owen clerk sa haue I thele
Now dere lemman quod she go fayr wele
But or thow go o thyng I wol the telle
Whan that thou wendist homward by the melle
Right atte entre of the dore behynde
Thow shalt a cake of half abusshel fynde
That was maad of thyn owen mele
Whiche that I halp my fader forto stele
And gode lemman god the saue and kepe
And with that word almost she gan to wepe
Alayn vprist and thoughte or that it dalbe
I wil go crepe yn be my felawbe
And fond the cradil with his hond anon
Be god thoughte he al wrong haue I gon
My hed is toty of my swynk to nyght
That maketh me that y go not a right
I wote wel by the cradyl I haue mys go
Here lith the mylleve and his wyf also
And forth he goth a twenty deuyl way
Into the bed there the mylleve lay
He wende haue crepen yn be his felow John
And by the myller yn he crepe anon
And caughte hym by the nekke & softe spak

He sayde thou shrewe awake
For cristes soule and here a nobyl game
For by that lorde that calledy is same Jame
As I haue thryys in this shott nyght
Shrewyd the millers doughter bold knyght
Wyllis thou hast as a colbarde be agaste
Ye false harlot hast thou so haste
A fals traytour fals clerk quod he
Thou shalt be dede be goddis dignite
Who durste be so bolde to do suche dispetage
To my doughter that is of suche lynage
And be the throte bolle he aughte aleyn
And he kente hym dispitously agayn
And on the nose he smot hym with his fist
Doun ran the blode vp on his breste
And in the floor with nose & mouth to broke
They walowyd as piggis do in a poke
And vp they goon and doun ayen anon
Tyl that the Millere sporned at a stoon
And doun he fyl backward on his wyf
That wiste no thing of this nyce stryf
For she was falle in slepe a litil wight
With John the clerk that waked hath al nyght
And with the fal out of her slepe she breyd
Help holy crois of bromeholm she sayde
In manus tuas to the lorde I calle
A wake Symond the feend is on me falle
Myn herte is brokyn I am but dede
There lieth on my wombe and on my hede

Help Symkyn for the fals clerkis fighte
This John sterte vp as faste as he myghte
And graspith he the wallis to and fro
To fynde a staf and she sterte vp also
And knewe the estres bet than did this John
And by the walle a staf she took anon
And fraide a litil shymeryngе of a lighte
For at any hole yt shon the mone lighte
And by that lighte she fauh hem bothe two
But sikirly she nyste who was who
And as she fauh a whit thing in her ye
Ay whan she gan this white thing aspie
She wende the clerk hadde worn a volupiere
And with the staf she dreuh ay nere and nere
And wende haue hit this aleyn at the ful
And smoot the myller on the pilith skul
And down he goth and cryde harowh I dye
The clerkis bete hym wel and let hym lye
And greythen hem and eek hir hors anon
And eke hir mele and on her wey they goon
And atte mylle dore yet he took his cake
Of half a bussh̄el flour wel I take
Thus is the prouth myller wel I kete
And hath lost the gryndynge of the whete
And payth for the soper euerich̄
Of aleyn and of John that bet hym wel
His wyf is swyuyth and his doughtir als
Lo suche it is a millere to be fals
And therto this prouerbe is sayth ful soth

Hym dare not Bene Bell that eryl doth
A gilour shal euer beguyled be
And god that sit in high magestē
Saue al this compayne gretē and smalē
Thus haue I quyt the Mylleres his tale

Here endith the Reues tale.

And begynneth the cokis prologe.

THe cook of london Whyle the Reue spak
For ioye he loughē he clapped hym on ȳ bak
A ha quod he for cristes ores passion
This Mylleres hath a sharp conclusion
Vp on his argument of herbegage
Wel sayde Salamon in his langage
Me preesse not euery man in thy hous
For herborowynge be nyght is perlous
Wel ought a man auisid for to be
Whom that he bringe in to his priuite
I prey to god so yeue me sorow and care
Syn euyr that I highte hogge of Ware
Herd I Mylleres tale y set a werk
He hadde a Jape of malice in the derk
But god forbede that we stynten here
And therfore yf ye Rouchesauf to here
A tale of me that am a poure man
I Wol you telle as wel as I can
A litel Jape that fyl in our cyte
Our ost answerd & sayde I graunte it the
Now telle on Roggier lokie that it be good
For many a pasty hast thou lete blood

And many a iacke of duste haste thou solde
That hadde be ellis hoot and ellis colde
Of many a pilgrym haste thou cristen made
For of thy persely yet sure they the were
Wold tel on gentil roger be thy name
But I pray the be not wroth for game
A man may say ful soth in game and ple
Thou saiste soth sayde Roger be my fey
But soth ple quade ple as the flemyng saith
And therfore hurry hastily be thy feyth
Be thou not wroth as we departen here
Though that my tale be of an hostillere
But natheles I wil not telle it yet
But or we departe I wis thou shalt be quyt
And therwith al he lough and made chere
And sayde his tale as ye shul after here

Here endith the cokis prologe.
And begynneth his tale.

Aprentis whilom dwelt in our cyte
Of craft of victaillers was he
As gaylardy he was as goldesmyth in ꝑ schalle
Iolyf as a iay a proper felalle
With lokkis I kembid ful fetously
Daunce he coude wel and iolily
That he was clepid Perkyn Reuelour
He was as ful of loue and paramour
As is the hyue ful of hony swete
Wel was the wenche ꝑ with hym myghte mete
And at euery bridale wolde he synge & hoppe

The lordyn hettir the nexthir ende thay the shoppe
For ther ever ydyng was in chepe
Out of the shoppe thyder wolde he lepe
Tyl that he hadde al the plaghe y seyn
And dawnsed wel he wolde not comm ageyn
And gadrid hym a meyne of hos fost
To hoppe & synge & make suche disport
And there they sette stroone forto mete
To pleyy at the dyse in suche a strete
For in the town was ther no prentyse
That sayrer coude caste a peyre of dyse
Than Perkyn coude and therto he was fre
Of his dispence in place of pryuyte
That sondy his maister wel in his chaffare
For oftyme he sondy his for ful bare
For shortly a prentis that is a reuelour
That hauntith dyse riot and paramour
His maister shal it in his shoppe abye
Al haue he no part of the mynstralsye
For thefte and riot they be comitet tibyll
Al can he pleye on giterne or fibyll
Reuel and trouthe as in a lord degre
They be ful wroth alday as men may se
This ioly prentis with his maister stood
Tyl he was neer oute of his prentishod
And were he styborn bothe erly and late
And sumtyme ledy with reuel to Medegate
Where he his Enthriftynes sore aboughte
But atte laste his maister hym bethoughte

Up on a prouerbe that ſaith the ſame wyſe
Wel hee is woon appyl oute of horde
They that he woon al the remenaunt
So ſaith it be a riotous ſeruaunt
It is ful laſſe harm to late hym pas
Than he ſholde al the ſeruauntis in the plas
Therfore his maiſter paſ hym acquietaunce
Andy lady hym go With ſowu & myſchaunce
Andy thus this iolyf prentis hadde his leue
Wold let hym riot al the nyght or leue
Andy ther is no theef Without look
That helpith hym to Waſte or to ſolde
Of that he lyple any or borowd may
Anon he ſelliith his bedy andy his aray
Vnto a compiere of his olden ſorte
That louyeth dyſe ryot andy diſporte
Andy hadde a Wyf that helpy for contenaunce
Of ſhoppe & Wyuedy for hir ſuſtenaunce

Here endith the Coktys tale Andy begynneth the may of ſaldis prologe

Oure hooſt ſaid that by the heighe ſonne
The ark of his artificial day hadi ronne
The fourthe part andy half any houre & more
Andy therfore he Were not deppe ſtert in lore
He Waſte it Was the.xxij. day
Of aprill that is meſſanger to may
Andy ſaid Wel that the ſhadoid of euery tre
Was in lengthe of the ſame quantite
That Was the body erect that cauſid it

And therfore he the sothe he tooke his leve
That phebus whiche that shoon so clene & breyght
Degrees was.xlv. clomben on heyght
And for that day is in latitude
Hit is ten of the clocke he gan conclude
And sodenly he pligħt his hors aboute
Lordinges quod he I warne you al the route
The fourthe part of this day is goon
Now for the loue of god and saint John
Lese no tyme as ferforth as ye may
Lordinges the tyme wasteth bothe nyght & day
And steleth fro vs what prively slepynge
And what thurgh negligence in our walkynge
As doth the streme that turneth neuer agayn
Descendyng fro the mountayn in to the playn
Wel can seneck and many a philosophre
Bewayled tyme more than golde in cofre
For los of catell may recouered be
But los of tyme shendith vs quod he
It wyl not come ayen without drede
Namore than wol malkynes maydenhede
Whan that she hath lost it in hir wantownesse
Let vs not mowlyn thus in idelnesse
Sire may of lawe quod he so haue thou blis
Tel vs a tale anon as forward is
Ye be submyttyd thorough your fre assent
To stonden in this cas at my Jugement
Acquyte you now of your beheste
Than haue ye do your devyr at the leeste

Hoost quod he depar diey Je assent
To lytle forward is not myn entent
Celeste his dette and I wolde fayn
Plese yow and therto wole I do my payne
For suche talde as men yeueth another wight
He sholde hym self vse it be right
Thus wol our text but natheles certeyn
I am right nowe no thrifty tale seyn
That Chaucer they he can but lewdely
On metris and on rymynge craftely
Hath sayd hem in suche englisch as he can
Of olde tyme as knoweth men I man
And yf he hath not sayd hem leue brother
In o book he hath sayd hem in another
For he hath told of louers vp and doun
Mo than Ouyde made of mencioun
In his Epistelis that ben olde
What sholde he telle hem sith they be tolde
In youthe he made of Ceyces and alcyon
And sith he hath spoken of eutrichon
Thyse nobil wyuys and thyse nobil louers eke
Who that wol his large volum seke
Clepyd the sayntis lyues of cayde
There may he see the large woundis wyde
Of lucrece and of babylone tisbe
The swerd of dido for the fals Enee
The swerd of phillis for hire demophon
The playnte of dyanere and of hermyon
Of adriane and of isiphile

The lareyn yle stondynge in the se
The dreynt hardir for his erro
The teris of Eleyne and eke the woo
Of Briseyde and of Lodomea
The cruelte of the quene Medea
The litil childreyn hangynge be the hals
For why Jason that was of loue so fals
Eyrmystra Penelope and alceste
Her wyfhode comendynge with the beste
But certeynly no word ne writith he
Of that wicked ensaumpyl of Canace
That loued her owen brothir synfully
Of whiche cursid storyes I say fy
Or ellis of Tirus appolonius
How that the cursid kyng antiochus
Geraft his doughter of hir maydenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
Whan he here throwh vp on the pament
And therfore he ful of auisement
Wolde neuer write in none of his sermons
Of suche vnkindy abhomynacions
Ne I wol none reherce yf that I may
But of my tale what sholde I do this day
Me were loth be likned doutles
To myses that men clepe piarydes
Methamorphoseos wot what I mene
But nether theles I recke not a bene
They I come aftir hym the whiche hath no lak
I speke in prose let hym rymes make

And with that word he with a sobir chere
Began his tale as ye shul afeer here
O Hateful harm condicion of pouert
With thirst. cold & hunger so cõfoundid
To asken help the shameth in thy hert
Yf thou noy aske with nede art thou so wounded
That nexty nede vnwrappith al thy wounded hid
Magre thyn hed thou muste of indigence
Or stele or begge or lowlh thyn dispence
Thou blamyst crist and sayst ful bitterly
He mys departith riches temporal
Thyn neyghebour thou witist synfully
And sayst thou hast to lite and he hath al
Parfay sayst thou one day he rekey shal
Whey that his tayl shal breme in the glede
For he not helpith the nedful in her nede
Herkenyth what is the sentence of the wyse
Bet is to dyen thay to haue indigence
Thy self neyghbour wol the despyse
Yf thou be poure farewel thy reuerence
Yet of the wisemay take his sentence
Alley that poure mey be wikk
Bebaar or thou come to the prik
Yf thou be poure thy brother hatith the
And alle thy frendis fle fro the allas
O riche marchauntis ful of wele ye be
O nobyl and prudent folk as in this cas
Your baggis bith not fillyd with ambes as
But with sys synk that renneth in your chaunce

At Cristemasse merry mowe ye daunce
Ye seruyng lordy and se for your plesynges
And as wyse folk ye knowe al the state
Of reygnes that been sadde of tidynges
And tales bothe of pres and of debate
I were right nowe of a tale desolate
Me were that a Marchaut gon is many a yere
Me taughte a tale whiche ye mowe here

In Surry whylom duellyd a compayne
Of Chapmen riche therto sadd & trewe
That wyde where sendyn their spicerye
Clothis of goldy & satyn riche of hewe
Her chaffare was so trusty and so newe
That euery wight hath deynte of her chaffare
And eke with hem to selle hire ware
Now fyl it that the maistris of the sort
Haue shapyn hem to Rome forto wende
Were it for chapman hoody or for disport
Non other message wolde they thyder sende
But arm hem self to Rome this is the ende
And in suche place as thoughte hem auantage
For her entent they takyn her herbygage
Soiourneden haue thyse marchantis in that toun
A certeyn tyme as fyl for her plesaunce
But so be fyl that the excellent renoun
Of the Emperours doughter dame Constaunce
Reported was with euery circumstaunce
Unto thyse marchantis in suche wyse
Fro day to day as y shal you deuyse

This was the comyn lois of euery man
The Emperour of Rome godi hym se
A doughter hath that sleth the Worlde begeyn
To reken as wel her goodnes as her beaute
Was neuer suche another as was she
I pray to godi in honour here susteyne
Andi Wolde she were of al Europe the queene
In here is high beaute without pryde
Yonghth without greef or folye
To alle her werkis vertu is her gyde
Humblesse hath slayn in here al tirannye
She is a myrrour of al curtesie
Her herte is verry chambir of holynesse
Her hondi mynyster of fredom andi of almesse
Andi al this lois is soth as godi is trewe
But nowe to purpos lete vs turne ayeyn
Thise marchantis haue do fraught her shippis newe
Andi when they haue the blisful mayde seyn
Home to surrey they wente ageyn
Andi don her nedis as they dede yore
Andi liuen wel I can say nomore
Now fil it so thyse marchauntis stoodi in grace
Of hym that was the foldon of surrye
For when that they com so ony straunge place
The Wolde of his benigne curtesie
Make hem goodi chere andi biselv aspye
Tidyngis of sundey regnys forto leve
The wondrys that they mighte se andi heve
Among othir thingis specially

This marchaūtes haue told of thine Custaūce
So gret noblesse in ernest ententyf
That this soldaūn hath anyghe so gret plesaūce
To haue her figure in his remembraūce
And al his lust and al his besy cure
Was forto loue here whiles his lif may endure
Paraventure in that large book
Whiche I clepe the heuen ywryte was
With sterrys that he his berthe took
That he for loue shulde haue his deth allas
For in the sterrys clerer than is the glas
Ys writyn godys wood who so coude rede
The deth of euery man withouten drede
In sterrys many a wynter there before
Was wryte the deth of Ector & Achilles
Of Pompey Julius or they were born
The stryf of Thebes and of Hercules
Of Sampson Turnus and Socrates
The deth but mennys wittis be so dul
That noman can rede it atte ful
This soldaūn for his pryuy counceil sent
And shortly on this mater forto passe
He hath to hem declared his entent
And sayde hem certeyn but he myghte haue grace
To haue Custaunce in a litil space
He nas but ded and chargede hem on hye
To shapen for hym som remedy
Diuers men diuers thinges saiden
They argumentes castyn vp and down

Many a fotil reſon ſeuith they hyere
They ſpak of magyk andy abuſion
But finally as in this concluſion
They can not ſee in that noy auauntage
Ne in noy othir Wey ſaue in mariage
Thus ſaid they ther ymne ſuche difficultees
The Wey of reſon to ſpeke al playn
The cauſe that ther Was ſuche diuerſitees
Betwix her Wette lawes that they layn
They trowe that no criſten prince Wolde layn
Wedden his childy vnder our lawes ſwete
That vs Was taught be mahoundy our pphete
Andy he anſWerdy rathir than I leſe
Cuſtaunce I Wil be criſtenedy doutles
I moot be heris I may noy othir cheſe
I pray yoW holdy youre argumentis in pees
Sauyth my lif andy be not recheles
To getey here that hath my lif in arre
For in this Wo I may not longe endure
What nedith greeter delectacion
I ſay be certyſe andy enbaſſetrye
Andy by the Popis mediacioun
Andy al the chirche andy al the chiualrye
That in deſtruccion of mahometrye
Andy in encrees of criſtis lawe deve
They be accordedy as ye ſchul here
HoW that the Soldan andy his lawmage
Andy alle his liegis ſchul criſtenedy be
Andy he ſchal haue cuſtaunce in mariage

Alway amongs other I not What quaintyse
And diuers fantasies they goodly feede
The same amonge Was store in other spede
And Whan Custaunce alwayghes goth the gate
And Whan sory may Wene as I gesse
That I shoulde telle al the purueaunce
That the Emperour of his grete noblesse
Hath shape for his doughter dame Custaunce
Wel may men knowe that so grete ordenaunce
May no man telle in a litil clause
As Was araydy for so high a cause
Bisshoppis ben shapen With her forth Wende
Lordis and ladyes of grete renoun
And other folk ynough this is the ende
And notifyed is throughout out the toun
That euery Wight With deuocioun
Shulde praye and that this mariage
Receyue in gre and spede this viage
The day is come of hir departyng
I say that the Wofull day is come
That ther may be no lenger taryyng
But forthardy they dresse hem alle and some
Custaunce that With sorow is al ouercome
Ful pale ariseth and dresseth her to Wende
For Wel she Woot ther is non other ende
Alas What Wonder it is though she Wepte
That shal be sent to straunge nacion
Fro frendis that here so tenderly kepte
And to be bounde Vnder subiection

Of me she smolleth not the condicion
Husbondes been alle gode and haue be yore
That knolle Brutus I dar say nomore
Fader she sayde thy Wreched childy custaunce
Thy yonge doughter fostred vp so softe
That most you loueth With obeissaunce
Ouir alle thing out take crist oy lofte
Castaunce your childy her recomaundith ofte
Vnto your grace for I shal to fuerre
Me shal I neuer se you more With ye
Allas vnto the barbarik nacion
I muste anoy accordyng to your Wil
But crist that deyde for our redempcion
So yene me grace his hestis to fulfille
I Wreched Wommay no fors though I spylle
Wommen are bozn to thraldom & to penaunce
And to be vnder mannys gouernaunce
I trow at troye When Turnus brac the Wal
Of Ilioy nor brent Was Thebes the Cyte
Me Rome for the sege of hanybal
That Romayns hadde sengruyssheby tymes thre
Nas herdy suche tender Weppynge for pyte
As Was in the chambir for her departynge
But forth she mooe Whether she Wepe or synge
O frosty mornynge cruel firmament
With thy dyurnal Whele that crolbdest ay
And hurtelist al fro este to occidente
That naturelly Wolde holde another Wey
Thy crolbdyng set the heuen in suche aray

At the begynnynge of this firste viage
That cruel marce hath slayn this mariage
O infortunat ascendant tortuous
Of whiche the lordy is helples falle allas
Out of his angil in to the thirde hous
O marce ocitaser as in this caas
O feble mone vnhappy be thy pas
Thold knettist the there thou art not resceyuedy
There thou art wel fro they art thou weyuydy
Imprudent Emperour of Rome allas
Was ther no philisophir in thy tovn
Is no tyme lettir thay anothir in this caas
Of viages is ther noy election
Namely so folk of hygh condicion
Not whay a rote is of a birthe y knowe
Allas we kesy to lewdy and ekis to slowe
To shippe is brought this woful fayre mayde
Solempuly with auery circumstaunce
Now Jhesu crist be with you alle she sayde
Ther is nomore but far wel fayre Custaunce
She pynyth her self to make goody contenaunce
And forth J lete here sayle in this manere
And turne ayen J wol to my matere
The moder of the goldday welle of vicis
Aspyedy hath her sonys playn entent
Now he wolde lete his olde sacrificis
And right anon she for her counsel sent
And they be come to knowe what she ment
And whay assemblidy was this folk in fere

She sette her down & sayde as ye shul here
Lordinges quod she ye knowe wel euerichon
How that my sone is in poynt forto lete
The holy lawis of our alcaron
Yeuen by goddis messanger Machomete
But ony a lolbe to the grete godyn I hete
The lif shal rathir out of my body sterte
Or machometis loue go out of my herte
What sholde vs tidyn of this nelbe lawe
But thraldom to our body and penaunce
And afterwardy in helle to be drawe
For we reneyedy Mahoundy our creaunce
But lordis wille ye make assuraunce
As I shal say assentyngy to my love
And I shal make vs sauf for euermore
They swory and assentedy euery man
To lyue with hir and dye and by hir stonde
And euriche in the beste wyse that he can
To strengthe her shal his frendis fonde
As she that hath this empryse take on honde
Whiche ye shul here as I shal deuyse
And to hem alle she spak in this wyse
We shul vs first fayne cristendom to take
Coldy watre ne shal vs greue but a lyte
And I shal suche a feste and a reuel make
That as I trowe I shal the soldon quyte
For though his wyf be cristenedy neuer so whit
She shal haue nede to wasshe alley the rede
Though she a fonte ful of water with her lede

O ſolwommes pote of iniquyte
Virago thou ſamarian the ſecunde
O ſerpent vnder ſemenyn beaute
I lik vnto the ſerpent dept in helle I bounde
O ſeynedy woman al that may confounde
Vertu and Innocence thurgh thy malice
Envy is in the neſt of euery vice
O ſathan empyous ſyn that day
That thold were chaced from our heritage
Wel knowbeſt thold to women the olde way
Thold madiſt one to beynge bis in ſeruage
Thou wolt forday this criſten mariage
Thyn inſtrument ſo wel a way the whyle
Makiſt thou of woman whan thou wilt begyle
This ſolwommeſſe whom I thus blame e wery
Let priuely her counſel go her way
What ſholde I lenger in this tale tary
She rideth to the Solday on a day
And ſayde to hym that ſhe wolde renye her lay
And criſtendom of preſtis honde fonge
Repentyng her that ſhe hethen was ſo longe
Beſechinge hym to do her that honour
That ſhe myghte haue the criſten folk to feſte
To pleſen hem I wyl do my labour
The Solday ſaith I wyl do at your heſte
And kneling thankid her of that requeſte
So glad he was he nyſte what to ſey
She kyſſid her ſone and home ſhe goth her wey
Aryued be this criſten folk to londe

In furry with a greet solempne vonte
And hastely this Soldon sente his sonde
First to his moder and to al the regne aboute
And sayde his wyf was come withoute doute
And preyde her to ryde ayens the quene
The honour of his regne to sustene
Greet was the prees and riche was the aray
Of surriens and of Romayns met in fere
The moder of the soldon riche and gay
Resceyuyth hir with al glady chere
As ony moder myghte her doughter dere
And to the neyte eyte there beside
A softe pas solempuly they ride
Mought troll J the triumphe of Julius
Of whiche that lucan makith suche a booste
Was ryaller ne more corious
Than was the assemble of this blisful ost
But this scorpion this wicked goost
The soldomesse for al hir flaterynge
Cast vnder this ful mortally to stynge
The soldon comyth hym self sone after this
So rially that wonder was to telle
And welcomyth hir with ioye and blis
And thus with ioye and blis J lete hem dwelle
The fruyt of euery tale is for to telle
Me thoughte it whey tyme cam for the best
That reuel to stynt and mey to go to reste
The tyme cam this olde Soldomesse
Ordeyneth hath this feste of whiche J tolde

And to the feste cristen men dresse
In general both yonge and olde
There may men reuel and feste beholde
And dayntees mo than I can deuyse
But al to dere they boughte it er they ryse
O soueryn lo that euer art successour
To wordly blis spreynt with bitternes
The ende of our Joy and of our wordly labour
Wo occupieth the fyn of our gladnesse
Herkyn this counsel for thy sikernesse
Up on thy glady day haue in thy mynde
The vnbaar lo that comyth the behynde
For shortly to telle at o word
The soldan and the cristen euerichone
Gery al to hewen and stiked at the borde
But it were only dame Custaunce allone
This olde Soldannes cursid crone
Hath with her cursid frendis there don this dede
For she her self wolde al the contre lede
Ne there was Surreyn none that was conuertid
That of the counsel of the Soldan wotith
That he nas al to hewen or he astertid
And Custaunce haue takyn as they wotith
And in a ship starles god it wotith
They haue her set and bidn her lerne to sayle
Out of Surrye ayen in to Jtayle
Al certeyn tresour that she thyder ledde
And soth to sayn vitayl greet plente
They haue her yeue and clothis eek she hadde

And forth she sayled in to the salt se
O my Custaunce ful of benignite
O Emperours yong doughter dere
He that is lord of oure fortune be thy stere
She blissed hir and with ful pitous vois
Unto the cros of crist said she
O clere O wofull auter holy cros
Rede of the lambis blody ful of pyte
That wesshist the world fro old iniquite
Me fro the fend and fro his clawis kepe
That day that I shal drenche in the depe
Victorious tre of protection trewe
That only were ordeyned forto bere
The kyng of heuen with his woundis newe
The white lamb that hurt was with a spere
Flemer of fendis out of hym and of here
Of whiche thy lymes feithfully extende
Me kepe and yeue me myght to amende
Yeris and dayes fleet this creature
Thorwh out the se of greek in to the streyte
Of Marrok as it was her auenture
O many a sory meel may she beyte
After her deth ful ofte may she wayte
Or that the wilde wawes wolde her dryue
Unto the place where that she shal arryue
Mey myght aske why she was not slayn
And eek atte feste who myght her body saue
And I answere to that demaunde agayn
Who sauyd Daniel in the horrible Caue

Thus euery wight bere he maistir or knaue
Wus with the doun foot on he a sterr
No wight but god that he baar in his hert
God lust to shelde his wonderful miracle
In here for she sholde se his mighty werkis
Trist that is of euery harm triacle
Se certayn menys ay-knowen clerkis
Doth thingis that for certeyn ende sul derk is
To mannys wit that for our ignorawnce
Ne can not knowe his prudent purueawnce
Nowe sith that she nas at the feste y stalle
Who kepte her fro drenching in the see
Who kepte Jonas in the fisshis malle
Tyl he was spowted out at nynyue
Wel may men knowe it was no wight but he
That kepte the peppl of Ebrew fro drenching
With drye foot thorugh out the see passinge
Who hath the foure spiritis of tempeste
That power haue to annoyen londe and see
Sothe North and south west and est
Annoyeth neyther londy hous ne tre
Sothly the comaunder of that was he
That fro the tempest ay this woman kepte
As wel whan she wook as whan she slepte
Where myghte this woman mete & drynk haue
Thre yere and more lastith her vitayll
Who fedde the Egipcian Mary in the caue
Or in desert noy but crist saunz fayll
Fyue thousandy folk it was a gret meruayll

With louys fyue and fifthis two to fede
God halpe her alwey in her nede
She deyueth forth in to our ocian
Thorgh out our Wyde se til at the laste
Vndir an holdy that nemene Jne eny
Fer in Northumbirland the Walys her caste
And in the fond the ship sticketh so faste
That thens Wolde it not al that tyde
The Wil of crist Was there she shulde abyde
The constabil of the castel doun is fare
To se this Wrakke and al the ship he soughte
And fond this doutif Wommay ful of care
He fond also the tresour that she broughte
In her langage mercy she he soughte
The lif out her body forto Wynne
Her to deliuer out of the Wo that she Was ynne
A maner latyn corupt Was her speche
But algatis ther by Was she Vnderstonde
The Constabil Whan hym list no lenger seche
This Woful Wommay brought he to londe
She knelith doun and thankith cristis sonde
But What she Was she Wold nomay sey
For foul ne fair thogh she sholde dye
She saith she Was so masid in the se
That she forgat her mynde by her trouble
The Constabil hath of hir so gret pyte
And eke his Wyf that Wepen sore for wo Wolde
She Was so diligent Withoute slouthe
To serue and plese euerich in that place

That al her loue that lokyn in her face
The Conſtabyl andn dame hermegildn his wyf
Were paynemys andn that contre euery where
But hermegildn louydn her as her lyf
Andn Cuſtance hath ſo longe J ſoiournedn there
In oriſoun with many a bittir tere
Tyl Jheſus hath conuertidn thorough his grace
Dame hermegilde the Conſtablis wyf of ỳ place
In al that londn no criſten durſte route
Alle criſten men be fledn fro that contre
Thorough paynemes that conqueredn al aboute
The Royame as wel by londe as by ſee
To Wales themme fledde the Criſtiamte
Of olde britons duellyngn in that Jle
Ther was no reſute for the mene whyle
But yet were criſten britons ſo eyledn
That ther nas ſony in her priuyte
Honourydn criſt andn hethen folk begilydn
Andn nygh the caſtel ſuche ther dwellidn there
That one of hem was blyndn & myght not ſe
But it were with thicke yey of his mynde
With whiche they ſeen aftir men be blynde
Bright was the ſonne as in a ſomers day
For whiche the Conſtabyl andn his wyf alſo
Andn Cuſtaunce hath take the right way
Towardn the ſee a furlongn wey or two
To pleyen andn to romen to andn fro
Andn in this walk the blynde men they mette
Cokidn andn olde with yey faſte J shette

In the name of crist cryde this briton
Same Hermegilde yeue me my sighte ageyn
This lady Way afraydy of that soun
Lest that her husbondy shortly sorto seyn
Wolde here for Jhesus cristis love haue sleyn
Til custaunce made hir bolde & bady her Wirche
The Wil of criste as doughter of holy chirche
The constabil Wepte a bussbdy of that sighte
Andy sayde What amountith al this fare
Custaunce answerde sire it is cristis myghte
That helpith folk out of the fendis snare
Andy so ferforth she gan our lalde declare
That she the Constable or it Were eue
Conuertedy hath andy oy crist made hym beleue
This Constable Was no thing lordy of this place
Of Whiche J spak ther he Custaunce fonde
But kepte it strongly many Wyntris spaces
Vndir alla kyngy of al Northumbirlondy
That Was ful Wyse andy Worthy of his hondy
Ayens the scottis as men may Wel here
But turne ayen J Wil to my matere
Sathan that euer bis Waytith to begyle
Saw of Custaunce al the perfection
Andy caste anoy how he mighte quyte her While
Andy made a yongy knight dWelling in y toun
Loue here so hote of foul affection
That verily hym boughte he shal spille
But he of here onys mighte haue his Wille
He Wolbith hir but it auayleth nought

The Wolde to no synne he no Way
And for despit he compassith in his thought
To make here on shamful deth to day
The Kaytith Whan the Constabyl is a Way
And prively on a nyght he crepte
In hermegildis chambir Whylis she slepte
Wery forwakid in her orisons
Slepith hermegilde and Constaunce also
This knyght thorough sathans temptacions
Al softely is to the bedy goo
And kutte the throte of hermegildy a two
And leyde the blody knyf he dame Custaunce
And Wente his Wey there godi yeue him mischaunce
Sone after comyth the Constabyl hom ayeyn
And ekie alla that Was kyngi of the londi
And salb his Wyf dispitously sleyn
For Whom he Wepte and Wrongi his hondi
And in the bedi the blody knyf he fonde
The dame Custaunce allas What might she say
For Verray Wo her Wit Was al a Way
To kyngi alla Was told al this myschaunce
And the tyme and Where and ekie the Wyse
That in a ship Was founde this Custaunce
As here before ye me haue herdi deuyse
The kyngis herte of pyte gan aryse
Whein he salb the benigne creature
Falle in disese and in mysauenture
For as the lomb towardi his deth is brought
So stant this Innocent a fore the kyngi

This fals knyght that hath this treson wrought
Greith hir in hondy she hath do this thyng
But nathéles there was gret mornyng
Among the pepyl andy sayden they can gesse
That she hadde not do so gret a wickednesse
For they haue seye here ayr so vertuous
Andy louyng hermegildy right as hyr lyf
Of this litar witnesse auerich in that hous
Saue he that slowh hermegildy with the knyf
This gentil kyng hath caught a gret motif
Of this witnesse & thought he wolde enquyre
Depere in this caas andy euerithe forto lere
Allas cristaunce thou hast no champion
Me fighte cans thou not so wel alday
But he that for our redempcion
Sondy sathan andy yet lith there he lay
He be thy strong champion this day
For but crist open myracle kithe
Without gilt thou shalt be slayn as swithe
She sette hir down on her knees & thus she sayde
Immortal godi that sauedist susanne
For fals blame andy thou mercyful mayde
Mary I mene doughtir of saint anne
Before whos childy aungelis syng Osanne
If I begil tles of this felonye
My socour be or ellis I shal dye
Haue ye not se sum tyme a pale face
Of hym that hath be lady in a prees
Tohardy his deth where he getith no grace

And ſuche a colour in the knyghtis face chees
Ney myghte knolle his ſade in all the prees
Among al the faces that was in that route
So ſtant Cuſtaunce and lokith here aboute
O quenes lynage whilom in proſperite
Ducheſſe and ladyes enerichone
Haue ſom wolde on hir aduerſite
Ay Emperours doughter ſtont allone
She wook not to whom to make her mone
O ryal lady that ſtondiſt in this dede
Fer ley thy frendes at thy greet nede
This Alla hath ſuche compaſſion
As gentil herte is fulfillyd of pyte
That from his yey ran the watir doun
Anon haſtely go fet a book quod he
And yf that this knyghe wol ſwere that ſhe
Hath this woman ſlayn yet wyl we vs auyſe
Whom that we wyl ſhal be our Juſtiſe
A britoun book writen with euangelies
Was ſet and there on he ſwoor anon
She gilty was and in the mene whyles
Ay hondy hym ſmoot vp on the nechie boon
That doun he fyl at onys as a ſtoon
And bothe his yen breſt out of his face
In ſighte of euery body of that place
A voys was herd in generall audience
And ſayde thou haſt diſclaundrid gilteles
The doughter of holy churche in high preſence
Thus haſt thou doon and yet I holde my pes

Of this meruayll agaſt Was al the prees
As maſdy folk they ſtonden entrichon
For dede of Wreche ſaue Cuſtaunce alone
Sweet Was the deede andy ese the repentawnce
Of hem that hadde Wrongy ſuſpection
Vp on this seky Jnocente Cuſtaunce
Andy for this miraklil in concluſion
Andy by Cuſtaunces mediacion
The kyngy andy many another in that place
Conuertidy Was thankidy be cristis grace
This fals knighte Was ſlayn for his vntrouthe
By Jngement of the kyngy alla haſteky
Andy yet hadde Cuſtaunce of his deth gret routhe
Andy after Jheſus of his mercy
Made alla to Wedde hir ſolemky
This holy maidey that is so bright andy ſhone
Andy thus hath crist maady Cuſtaunce a quone
But Who Was Woful yf J ſhal nat ky
Of this Weddyngy but donygelde andy nomo
The kyngis modir ful of tirannye
Her thoughte her cursidy herte braſt a two
She nolde not her ſone hadde ſo do
Her thoughte a deſpyt that he ſholde take
So ſtraunge a creature vnto his make
Me liſt not of the chaf ne of the ſtre
Make so longy a tale as of the cory
What ſholde J telle of the ryalte
Of this mariage or Whiche cors goeth before
Who blowith in a trompe or Who in a horn

The fruyt of every talk is for to sey
They eet and drank daunce synge and pley
They go to bedde as it is skyl and right
For though that wyuys be ful holy thyngis
They muste take in pacient a nyght
Suche maner of necessaries as been plesingis
To folk that haue wedded ben with ringis
And ley a litil her holynesse a syde
As for the tyme it may non other betyde
Or here he begate a may child anon
And to a bisshop and to his Constable eke
He took his wyf to kepe whyle he is goon
To scotlond ward his fomen forto seke
Moll faire Custaunce that is so humble & so meke
So long is goon with childe in that stylle
She kepte her chambir abydyng cristis wylle
The tyme is come a man child she beer
Mauricius at the fontstoone they hym calle
This Constabyl doth forth come a messanger
And wroot vnto this kyng þ clepyd was alle
How that this blissful tidingis is be falle
And othir thyngis whiche was nedful to saye
He taketh his lettre and forth he goth his waye
This messanger to do his auauntage
Vnto the kynges moder rideth he swythe
And saluyeth here fayre in his langage
Madame quod he ye may be glad and blythe
And thanken god ay hundrid thousand sithe
My lady the quene hath child withouten doute

To ioye and blisse of al this regne aboute
Lo here the lettres sealid of this thing
That I muste here in al the haste I may
Yf ye wil ought to your sone the kyng
I am your seruaunt bothe nyght and day
Dame donegelde answerde al this tym nay
But here al nyght I wol thou take thy rest
To morow I wol sey the what me leste
This messanger dranke sadly ale and wyne
And stolen were his lettres priuely
Out of his boy whilis he slepte as a swyn
And countrefetyd was ful subtilly
Another lettre wrought ful synfully
Vnto the kyng directyd of this matere
Fro his Constabil as ye may after here
The lettre spak the quene deliueredy was
Of so horrible a fendly creature
That in the Castel noy so hardy was
There no while ony wight myght endure
The modir was ay elph le auenture
I comyn le charmes or le sorcerye
And euery wight hateth hir in companye
Wo was the kyng whan he this lettre had seen
But to no wight he tolde his sorwis sore
But of his oldey hondy le wrot ayeen
Welcome the sonde of crist for euermore
To me that am lernedy in this lore
Lordy welcome le thy lust & thy pleasaunce
My lust I put al in thy ordenaunce

Kepe this child̄ al be it foul or fair
And eke my wyf vnto myn hom̄ comynge
Trist what hym list may make me ay her
More agreable than this to my likynge
This lettre he seleth prively wepynge
Whiche to the messanger was y take sone
And forth he goth there is nomore to doon
O messanger fulfillid with dronkenes
Straunge is thy breth thy lymys flaterȳ ay
And thou bewreyest al secretnes
Thy mynde is lore thou iangelist as a Jay
Thy face is turned as in a newe aray
There dronkenesse regneth in ony wyght
There is no counsel it is no doute
O donegelde J haue noy englisch digne
Vnto thy malice and thy tirannye
And therfore to the feend J the resigne
Lete hym enditȳ of his treytory
Fy mamyssh fy nay be god J ly
Fy feendly spirit for J dar wel telle
Though thou here walke thy spirit is in helle
This messanger comyth fro the kyng agayn
And at the kyngis modres court he lighte
And she was of this messanger ful fayn
And plesid hym in al that euer she myghte
He dranke and wel his girdyl vnder pyghte
He slepith and he snortith in his gyse
Al nyght til the sonne gan aryse
Afor were his lettres stolen awey

And counterfetith lettres in this wyse
The kyng Comaundith his Constabil anon
Up peyne of hongynge on high Juyse
That he ne sholde suffre in no wyse
Custaunce in his regne forto abyde
Thre dayes and a quartir of a tyde
But in the same ship as he here fond
Here and her yong sone and al her geer
He sholde put and croude fro the lond
And charge hir that she come nauer aftir there
O my Custaunce wel may thy goost haue feer
And slepyn in thy dreme le penaunce
Whan donegelde cast al this ordenaunce
This messanger on morowe whan he wook
Unto the Castel holdith the neyte way
And unto the Constabil he the lettris took
And whan that he this pitous lettre say
Ful ofte he sayde allas and wel a way
Lord crist quod he how may this worlde endure
So ful of synne is many a creature
O myghty god yf that it be thy wyll
Sithen thou art righteful Juge how may it be
That thou wolt suffre innocence to spylle
And wicked folk regne in prosperyte
O gode Custaunce alas so wo is me
That I moot be thy turmentour or elles dye
On shamful deth ther is non other remedye
Wepyn both olde and yonge in that place
Whan that the kyng this cursid lettre sent

Mary Tastament With a redy & a prest face
The fayre may toward the ship she went
But never the lees she taketh it in good entent
The Wyl of crist and kneelynge on the stronde
She sayde ay Welcom be thy sonde
He that me kepte fro the fals blame
Whylis that I Was on the londy amonges you
He may me kepe fro blame & elle fro shame
In the salt se although ye se not how
As strongy as euer he Was he is nigh
In hym I truste and in hes modes dede
That is to me my sayl and elle my stede
Her litil child lay Wepyng in her arm
And kneelyng pitously she sayde
Thes litil childe I Wol do the noy harm
With that the [illegible] from her hed she brayde
And ouer his litil yen she layde
And in her arm she lullith it ful faste
And in to heuene vp her yen she caste
Moder quod she and mayde bright Marye
Soth is that throw Womannys egement
Mankynde Was lost & dampnyd euer to dye
For Whiche thy child Was on the cros to rent
Thy blissful yen sawh al this turment
Thay is ther no comparison betWene
Thyn Wo and my Wo that may may sustene
Thou sawh thy childryn slayn a fore thyn yen
And yet now liueth my litil child perfay
Now lady bright to Whom alle Women cryen

Thou glorye of Womanhedy thou fairé may
Thou hauen of refut heighte sterre of day
Rewe on my childy that of thy gentilnesse
Rewest on euery synful in distresse
O litil childy allas What is thy gilt
That neuer Wroughtest synne as yet perde
Why Wyll thy hardy fader haue the spilt
O mercy andy dere Constabil quod she
As leet my litil childy dwelle here With the
Andy if thou darst not fauē hym fro blame
So kys hym onys in his fadres name
Therwith she lokith backbardy to the londy
Andy saide fare Wel husbondy wouthdes
Andy vp she goth & Walkith doun the strande
Towardy her ship here folowith al the prees
Andy euer she praieth hir childe to holde his pees
Andy taliith her leue With ay holy entent
She blissith her andy in to the ship she Went
Victaylidy Was the ship it is no drede
Habundauntly for her longy space
Andy othir necessaries that sholde nede
She hadde ynoh heriedy le goddis grace
For Wyndy & Wedir almyghty godys purchace
Andy beynge her hodym I can no bettir sey
But in the see she dryueth forth the Wey
Tla the kyngy sone after this
Vnto his Castel of Whiche I tolde
Asky Where his Wyf andy his childe is
The Constabil gan aboute his hert to colde

And plenly al the maner he hym tolde
As ye haue herd I can it telle no bettre
And shewith the kyngis seel and his lettre
And sayde lady as ye comaundith me
On peyne of deth so haue I to certeyn
This messanger tarmentith was til he
Must be knowe and telle plat and playn
Fro nyght to nyght what place he hath in kayn
And thus he with subtil enquerynge
Imagenedy was he whom this gay sprynge
The hondy was knowen that the lettir wrote
And al the kynryn of this cursidy rede
But in what wyse certeinly I not
The effect is this that alla out of drede
His moder slough that men may plainly rede
For she traytour was to her ligeaunce
Thus endith olde wnegelde with a myschaunce
The sorow that this alla nyght and day
Makith for his wyf and his childy also
There is no tunge that it telle may
But nowe wol I to Custaunce go
That sletith in the se with peyne and wo
Fyue yeer and more as liklyd cristis sonde
Or that her ship approchid to ony londe
Vnder an hethen castel at the laste
The whiche the name not in my text I fynde
Custaunce and eke hir childy vp caste
Almyghty godi that saueth almany kynde
Haue on Custaunce & her childy sum mynde

That ſalley is in hethey londy eſtſone
In poynt to ſpille as J ſhal telle you ſone
Doun from the Caſtel comyth ther many a wighte
To ganryy on this ſhip andy on Cuſtaunce
But ſhortly fro the Caſtel on a nyghte
The lordis Stewardy gody yef hym myſchaunce
A theef that hadde reyneby our creaunce
Com in to the ſhip allone & ſayde hou ſhe ſholde
His lemman be whether ſhe wolde or nolde
Tho was this wreachidy wommay wo be goy
Her childy cryde andy ſhe pitouſly
But bliſſedy mary helpe her anoy
For with her ſtrogelingy wel andy myghtely
The theef fil ouer the bordy al ſodenly
Andy in the ſe he dreynt for vengeaunce
And thus hath criſt vnbemmydy kept auſtaūce
O foul luſt of luxurye lo thyy ende
Not only that thou feyntiſt mannys mynde
But verily thou wolt his body ſhende
Thy of thy werk andy thy luſtis blinde
Is compleynynge hou many oy may mey finde
That nought for werk ſumtyme but ſole entent
To do this ſynne le othir ſleyy or ſhent
Holde may this werk wommay haue the ſtrengthe
Here to defende ayens the renegat
O Golias vnmeſurable of lengthe
Holde myghty Dauid made the ſo mate
So yongy of armure andy ſo deſolate
Holde durſte he loke vp oy thy face

Wel may men seey it is but goddis grace
Who yaf Judith corage or hardinesse
To sle Olofernes in his tent
And to deliuerey out of wrechidnesse
The pepyl of god I say to this entent
That right as god spirit and vigour sent
To hem and saued out of myscharnce
He sente strengthe & vigour vnto Custance
Forth goth her ship thrwgh out ỳ nawu mouth
Of Jubalter and septe driuyng ay
Som tyme west and som tyme nozth & south
And somtyme est ful meny a wery day
Til cristis moder ỳ blissid be she ay
Hath shapey thrwgh her endlees goodnesse
To make ay ende of al her heuynesse
Now lete vs stynte of Custance but a throwgh
And spekie of Romayns the Emperour
That out of Rome hath he letteris throwgh
The slaughter of cristey folk and dishonour
Doon vnto his doughter be a fals traytour
I mene the cursid and wicked folwdnesse
That at the feste leet sle bothe moze and lesse
For whiche this Emperour hath sent anon
His senatour with ryal ordenaunce
And othir lozdis god woot meny on
On surreyens to take high vengeaunce
They bzenne & sle & bzynge hem to myschaunce
Ful meny a day but shortly this is the ende
Hom̃bardy to Rome they shapey hem to wende

This senatour repayreth With victory
To Rome Ward sayling ful royally
And mette the ship as saith the story
In Whiche Custaunce sit ful pitously
No thyng knewh he What she Was ne Why
She Was in suche aray that she ne Wol sey
Of here astat though she sholde deye
He bryngeth hir to Rome to his Wyf
He yaf her to here and her yongh sone also
And With the senatour ladde hir lyf
Thus can our lady bryngе out of Wo
Woful Custaunce and many another mo
And longe tyme duelkyd she in that place
In holy Workis euer Was her grace
The senatours Wyf hir amite Was
But for al that she knewh her nauer the moze
I Wil no lengeр tarye in this caas
But to kyngh Alla Whiche I spak of yore
That hadh suche sorowe as I saidh before
I Wol reбourne and bete I Wol Custaunce
Vnder the senatours gouernaunce
Kyngh Alla Whiche that hadde his moder slayn
Vp on aday fil in suche repentaunce
And yf I shortly telle shal and pleyn
To Rome he cometh & receyueth his pnaunce
And put hym in the Popis ordenaunce
In high and lowe and Jhesus erst besoughte
Forgeue hym the Workis that he hath Wroughte
The fame anon throughh Rome is bory

Holl alla kynge shal vonne a pilgremage
Ye hertingeous that vontery hym beforn
For whiche the senatour as was the vsage
Rood hym ayens andy many of his kynage
As wel to shelley his magnificence
As to vody ony kynge reuerence
Sone there doth this nobyl senatour
To kynge alla andy he to hym also
Euery of hem doth to other gret honour
Andy so be fyl that on a day or elvo
This senatour is to kynge alla go
To feste shortly andy I shal not ly
Custaunces sone vente in his company
Sum men volde say at the requeste of Custance
This senatour hadde ledy this childy to feste
I may not telle euery circumstaunce
Be as be may there vas he at the leste
But soth it is right at his moder heste
Before alla duryng the mete space
The childy stoody lokyng in the kynges face
Alla the kyng of this childy hath gret vonder
Andy to the senatour he sayde anone
Whose is this fayre childy that stondith yonder
I not quod he be gody andy be sayne John
A moder he hath but fader hath he noon
That I of voot andy shortly in a stounde
He tolde alla holl the childy vas founde
But gody voot quod this senatour also
So hertuous a liuere in alle my lif

Ne ſalle I neuer ne herde of no
Of wordly wymmen maydyn wydoll or wyf
I dar wel ſay ſhe hadde leuer with a knyf
Thorolle out her breſt than be a woman wylle
Ther is noman coude beynge hir to the pryll
Nolle was this childy as lik vnto Cuſtaunce
As poſſible is a creature forto be
This alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of dame Cuſtaunce andy therby muſidy he
Yf that the childis moder were aughte ſhe
That is his wif andy priuely he ſighte
Andy ſpedde hym fro the tabyl al that he mighte
Parfay quod he the fantoy is in myn hedy
I oughte to deme of righteful Jugement
That in the ſalt ſe my wyf is dedy
Andy aftir wardy he made his argument
Whet woot I yf criſt haue hir hidir ſent
My wyf be ſe as wel as he her ſent
To my contre fro thens that ſhe went
Andy aftir anoy hoom with the ſenatour
Goth alla forto ſe this wonder chaunſe
This ſenatour doth alla gret honour
Andy haſtely he ſente aftir Cuſtaunce
But truſt wel her luſt not to daunce
Whan ſhe wiſte wherfore was that ſonde
Vmethis lip oy her feet mygthe ſhe ſtonde
Whan alla ſalle his wyf faire he her gretie
Andy wepte that it was routhe to ſe
For atte ferſte loke that he oy her ſette

He knewe verily that it was she
And for sorowe as doumbe stondeth as a tre
So was her herte shit in her distresse
Whan she remembreth of his vnkyndenesse
Thus she sorowneth in his olwey syghte
He wepte and hym excused pitously
Wolde god quod he and his halowes knyghte
So wisly on my soule haue mercy
That of your harm as giltles am I
As is my sone Maurice so lik your face
Ellis the fende me feche out of this place
Longe was the sobbyng & the bitter peyn
Er that her wofull herte myghte seese
Sweet was the pyte forto here hem compleyn
Thowu whiche pleyntis gan her wo encrese
I pray you alle my labour to release
I may not telle her wo vntil to morowe
I am so wery forto spelke of sorowe
But finally whan the soth is wist
That alla giltlees is of hir wo
I trowe an hundred tymes they kekyste
And suche a blisse is there betwix hem two
That saue the ioye that lastith euer mo
Ther nys noon I lik that ony creature
Hath seye or shal whylis the worlde may dure
Tho preyde she her husbonde meketly
In relessynge of her pitous peyne
That he wolde pray her fader spectally
That by his mageste he wolde enclyne

To louchesauf sumtyme with hym to dyne
She praieth hym ask he sholde be no wey
Vnto hir sader no word of here sey
Sum mey wolde seyn that the childe Maurice
Doth this message vnto the Emperour
But as I gesse alla was not so nyce
To hym that is so souereyn of honour
As he that is of cristis folk the flour
Sente ony childe but it is best to deme
He wente hym self and so it may wel seme
This Emperour hath graunted gentilly
To com to dyner as he hym besoughte
This alla was redy he lokyd byfily
Vp on this childe and on his doughter thoughte
Alla goth vnto his Inne and as hym oughte
Araid for this feste in euery wyse
As ferforth as his kunnynge may suffise
The morow cam alla gan hym dresse
And eke his wyf this Emperour for to mete
And forth they ryden in ioye and in gladnesse
And when she salw her sader in the strete
She lighteth down and falleth hym to fete
Sader quod she your yonge childe Custaunce
Is nowe ful cleen out of your remembraunce
I am your doughter Custaunce quod she
That whilom ye haue sent in to surreye
Yf any sader that in the salt see
Was put alone and dampned forto dye
Now gode sader mercy I you crye

[illegible]
[illegible] my lorde fyue of his kynchmesse
Who can the pitous ioye telle all
Whan hem thre sisteres they be thus met
But of my tale make ay ende I shal
The day goeth faste I may no lenger lette
Thise glady folk to dyner le y sette
In ioye and blisse at mete I lete hem duelle
A thousandy folde more than y can telle
This childy Maurice was sith Emperour
I maady he the Pope and lauyde cristenly
To cristis churche dede he gret honour
But I lete al thyse storyes passe by
Of Custaunce is my tale specially
In olde Romaynes gestes men may wel fynde
Mauricius lyf I here it not in mynde
Than kyngy alla Whan he his tyme say
With Custaunce his holy wyf so swete
To engelondy hem they come the right Way
Where as they liuen in ioye and in quyete
But litel Whyle it lasteth I you bete
Joye of this Worlde but a tyme it Wol abyde
Fro day to nyght it chaungith as the tyde
Who liueth euer in suche delite a day
That ne meuedy is eyther in conscience
Or ire or talent or sum kynmys affray
Enuye or pryde or passiony or offence
I ne sey but for the ende of this sentence
That litel Whyle in ioye or plesaunce

Lastith the tale of alla Wyth Custaunce
Hir deth that taketh of hyr e lolde his vente
Whey passedy was a yere as I gesse
Out of this Worldy this kyngy alla is went
For whom Custaunce hath ful greet heuynesse
Nolde pray we to godi his soule blesse
Andy dame Custaunce finally to say
Tolwardy the towny of Rome goth hir Way
To Rome is come this holy creature
Andy fyndeth her frendis there hole andy soundy
Nolde is she scapidy al her auenture
Andy Whey she hir fadir hath y founde
Doun oy her knees fallith to grounde
Weppynge in herte for tenderneste blithe
She herieth godi a hundredi thousandi sithe
In Vertu andy in holy almes dede
They liuey alle andy neuer a sonder Wende
Til deth departedy hem this lif they lede
Andy farith nolde Wel my tale is at ay ende
Nolde Jhesus crist that of his myghe may sende
Joye aftir Woo gouerne vs in his grace
Andy kepe vs alle that beey in this place

¶ Here endith the may of lalbis tale.

¶ Andy begynneth the squeyris prology.

Our hoste in his stirroppis stondeth anoy
Andy saide godemey herkeneth euerichoy
This Was a thrifty tale for the nonys
Sire parissh preest quod he for goddis bonys
Tel vs a tale as Was thy forwardy yore

I se wel that kenyngly men in love
Conne moche goodly be goddis dignite
The Parson hym answerde benedicite
What eyleth the man so sinfully to swere
Oure oste answerde Jankyn be ye there
I smelle a lollere in the wynd quod he
Now goodly men quod our host herkeneth me
Abideth for goddis digne passioun
For we shul haue now a predicacioun
This lollare wol preche vs here sum what
Nay be my fader soule that shal be nat
Sayde the squyer he shal not here preche
He shal no gospel glose here ne teche
We leue alle in the grete god quod he
He wolde sowe sum difficulte
Or spynne coltyl in our clene cote
And therfore ofte I warne the before
My ioly body shal a tale telle
And I shal clynke yow so mery a belle
That it shal wakyn al this company
But it shal not be of philosophy
Ne of phisik ne termes queynte of lawe
There is but litil latin in my mawe

Here begynneth the Squyeres tale.

AT sarray in the londe of Tartarye
There dwelled a kyng pt warred on russye
Thorw wh̄iche ther dyde many a doughty man
This nobyl kyng was clepid Cambuscan
Whiche in his tyme was of so grete renoun

That ther was nowhere in no regyon
So excellent a lordy in alle thyngy
He lackidy nought that longedy to a kyngy
As of the lete of whiche he was borny
He kepte his lay to whiche he was sworn
Andy therto he was hardy wyse andy riche
Pitous iust andy alwey y liche
Both of his worde benigne andy honorable
Of his corage as ony tentir stabil
Yongy fressh andy strongy e in armys desirous
As ony bacheler dwellyngy in his hous
A fair pfone he was andy fortunate
Andy kepte alwey a ryal astaat
That ther was nowhere suche a may
This nobil kyngy this tartir Cambuscay
He hadde two sonys on alpheta his wyf
Of whiche the eldest highte Algarsyf
That othir sone was clepidy Camballo
A doughter hadde this worthy kyngy also
That yongest was andy highte Canace
But forto telle you of hir beaute
It lith not in my tunge ne in my connyngy
I dar not take on me so higth a thinge
Andy also myn englisth eke is insufficient
I muste be a clerk andy a rethour excellent
That knewe the colours longingy to that art
If I shulde discrye hir in euery part
I am no suche I muste speke as I can
Andy so be fyl this Cambuscay

Whiche twenty Wynter bare his dyademe
As he Wente fro yeer to yeer y trowe
He bet the feste of his natiuite
Done aryse thowgh out fayry the eyte
The laste Jdus of Marche after the yeer
Phebus the sonne ful iolyf Was and cheer
For he Was in his exaltacion
In martis face and in his mansion
In aries the hote colerik signe
Ful lusty Was the Wether and benigne
For Whiche the foulis ayens the sonne shene
That for the seson and the yonge grene
Wel loude songe here affections
Hem semyde to gretyn ayen here protections
Agayn the sWerde of Wynter kene and coldy
And so this kynge of Whiche J you tolde
In ryal Vestimentis sat on his deys
With dyademe ful high in his paleys
And holdith his feste solempne and riche
That in this Worlde Was ther noy it liche
Of Whiche yf J shulde telle al the ray
Thay Wolde it occupye a somers day
And eke it nedith not to deuyse
At euery cours the ordre of her seruise
J Wol not telle of her strange sewis
Ne of her sWannys ne of her heronsewis
Eke in that londe as telleth kny3htis olde
Jn sum mete that is ful deynte holde
That in this londe men vseth of it but smal

Ther as nomay that may reporten al
I Wol not tarye you for it is pryme
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme
Unto my firste tale y Wol haue my retours
And so befil that after the thridde cours
Whyle that this kyng sat in his high nobleye
Herkenyng his mynstrallis here thing pleye
Before hym at his bord deliciously
In atte the halle dore sodenly
Ther cam a knyght upon a stede bras
And in his hond a brod myrrour of glas
And on his thombe he hadde of gold a ryng
And by his side a naked sword hanging
And up he rideth to the high borde
In al the halle ne Was ther spoke a Word
For merualle of this knyght hym to beholde
And bisely they Wayten yonge and olde
The straunge knyght that cam so sodenly
All armed saue his hed ful richely
He saluyd the kyng quene & lordis alle
By order as they sitten in the halle
With so high reuerence and obeisaunce
As Wel in speche as in contenaunce
That Gawen With his olde curtesie
Though he com ayen out of fairye
Ne coude hym amende With a Worde
And after this before the high lord
He With manly Wordis sayde his message
After the fourme used in his langage

Wythoute fayle of ſillabyl or letir
And for his tale ſholde ſeme the better
Accordynge to his Lordy Was his chere
As techith art of ſpeche hym that it lere
Al be it that I can not folwe his ſtyl
Ne I can not clymbe on ſo high an hille
Thay ſay I thus to the comyn entent
Thus muche amountith that he ment
If it ſo be I haue it in mynde
He ſayde the kynge of arrabye and of ynde
My liege lordy on this ſolempne day
Salewith yolde as he beſt can and may
And ſendith you honour at your feſte
Be me that am al redy at your heſte
This ſtede of bras that eſely and wel
Can in the ſpace of a day naturel
This is to ſay in .xxiiij. houris
Where you liſte in drought or in ſhoures
Bere your body to euery place
To Whiche your herte Willith forto pase
Withoute Wem of you thorough out foul or fair
Or yf you liſt to fle as high in the ayer
As doth ony egil Whan hym liſt to ſore
This ſame ſtede ſhal bere you euermore
Withoute harm til ye be there ye liſt
Though that ye ſlepe on his bac or reſte
And turne ayen With Bridynge of a pyn
He that it Wrought knowith many a gyn
He Waytith many a conſtellacion

Or he hadde wrought this operacion
And kneld meny a stryf & meny abonde
This myrrour eke that I haue in myn honde
Hath suche a myght that men may in it se
Whan ther shal falle ony aduersite
Vnto your regne or vnto your self also
And openly who is your frend or foo
And ouer al this if ony lady bright
Hath set her herte in ony maner wight
If he be fals she shal his treson se
His newe loue and al his subtilite
So openly that ther shal no thing hyde
Wherfore agayns this lusty somers tyde
This myrrour and this ring as ye may se
He sente hath to my lady Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here
The vertu of this ring yf ye wol here
Is this yf that her list it for to were
Vp on here thombe or in her purs it bere
There is no foul that fleeth vnder heuyn
That she ne shal vnderstonde his stevyn
And knowe his menyng openly & playn
And answere hym in his langage agayn
And euery gras that growith vpon erthe
She shal knowe and whom it wol do hothe
All be his wounde neuer so depe or wyde
This naked swerd that hangeth be my side
Suche vertu hath what man ye smyte
Throwh out his armure it wol kerue & byte

Were it as thicke as a braunchidy ook
And what may it Woundith With the strook
He shal neuer be hool til ye list of grace
To stroke hym With the plat in the same place
There he is hurt that is as mykyl to sayn
Ye moot With the plat Werdy agayn
Stroke hym in the Wounde and it Wol close
This is a verray soth Withouten glose
It fayleth not Whylis it is in your holde
And When the knyght hath thus his tale tolde
He woody out of the halle and doun he lighte
His stede Whiche that shoon as the sonne blight
Stont in the court stille as ony stoon
This knyght in to the chambir is ledy anon
And is vnarmedy and to mete y sette
The presentis be right richely kept
This is to say the Werdy and the mywur
Seen bozy anon in to the tour
With certeyn officers ordeynedy therfore
And vnto Canace this ring is bore
Solempuly there she sat at the tabyl
But stilely Withouten ony fabyl
The hors of bras that may not be remeuydy
It stont as it Were in the grounde y cleuydy
For none engynys Wyndas ne polyue
They may hit out of the place deyue
And cause Why for they con not the craft
And therfore in the place they haue it laft
Til that the knyght haue taught hym the manere

To beden hym as ye shul after here
Strete was the prees that sormyde to & fro
To gaderin on the hors that stoode so
For it so high was so stoode & so long
So wel proporcionede to be strong
Right as it were a stede of lumbardye
Therwith so horsly and so quyk of ye
As it a gentil poliy courser were
For certis from his tayl vnto his ere
Nature ne art coude hym not amende
In no degre as al the pepyl wende
But euermore yet most wonder was
How that it coude go and was of bras
It was of feire as al the pepyl semyde
Diuerse folk diuersly demede
As meny yedes. as meny wittis ther ben
They mormedyn as doth a swarm of been
And makeny skallys after hir fantesie
Rehersynge of the olde poetrie
And sayde it was like the pegase
The hors that hadde wyngis forto fle
Or ellis it was the grekis hors Symon
That brought grekis vnto destruccion
As men in thyse olde gestis rede
Myn herte quod oon is euermore in drede
I trowe sum men of armys be therynne
That shape hem this cyte forto winne
Yet were right good y al suche thing were knowe
Another wolde to his felowe lowe

And sayde he liedy for it was nathir lik
Ay apparence maady be sony magik
As iogelours pleyn at the festis grete
Of sondry thoughtis thus they iangil & trete
As lewdy pepyl demey alday comonly
Of thingis that beey maady more subtilly
Thay they komme in here boundis comprehende
They demyn gladly to the badder ende
And some of theym wondridy on the myrour
That bory was vp in to the maistir tour
Holde men myghte in it suche thingis se
Ay other answerde and sayde it may wel be
Naturelly made by compositions
Of aungelis and of sly reflections
And sayde that in Rome was suche oij
They spak of akteon and of vitelon
And of Aristotill that writiy in her liuys
Of queynte myrours and of prospectatiuis
As knowe they that haue her bokis herdy
And othir folk haue wondridy on the swerdy
That wol perisshy thorough euery thingy
And fil in speche of Thelephus the kyngy
And of Achilles for his queynte spere
For he coude with it bothe hele and dere
Right in suche wyse as men may with the swerdy
Of whiche right nowe ye haue your self herdy
They spekey of sondry hardyngy of metal
And spekey of medicines therwith al
And howe and whay it sholde hardidy be

Whiche vnknowe is algate to me
To spekē thay of Canaces ryngy
And sayde that al suche wonder thingy
Of craft of ringis herde they neuer noy
Saue that be moyses and be kyngy Salamon
Hadde a maner commynge of suche ay art
Thus seyy the peppl and dralbey hem apart
But neuertheles some sayde that it was
Wonder to make of sery glas
And yet is glas not lik asshey of sery
But for they haue knowe it so sery
Therfore seeth her iangelinge & her wonder
As fore wondre somy be cause of the thundir
Oy eble oy floody oy gessomer & oy myste
And oy al thingy til the cause is wyst
Thus iangelyn they and demyn & deuyse
Til that the kyngy gay from his bordy aryse
Phebus hath lost the angil meredional
And yet ascendyngy was the best ryal
The gentil lioun with his aldrpay
Whay that this tartir kyngy Cambuscay
Roos from his bordy there he sat ful hye
Beforn hym goth the lowde mynstralcye
Tyl that he cam to his chambir of paramentis
There as they soundyn dyners instrumentis
That is lik ay heuen for to here
Now daunsey lusty lemus childrey dere
For in the fisth her lady sat ful hye
And lokith oy hem with a frendly ye

This nobil kyng is set vp on his trone
This straung knyght is set to hym ful sone
And on the daunce he goth with Canace
There is the reuel and the Jolite
That is nat abil a dul man to deuyse
He muste haue knolege loue and his seruise
And be as festliche man as fresh may
That shul you deuysen suche aray
Who coude you telle the fourme of daunces
So merueilouse and so fressh contenaunces
And therto suche subtil lokyngis
For drede of Jelosie of mennys preyfingis
No man but Launcelot and he is ded
Therfore I passe ouer of al this lustihede
And say nomore but in this iolynesse
I lete hem til men to soper hem dresse
The stiwardy biddith spicis forto hye
And eke the wyne in al this melodye
The vssheres and the squieres ben goon
The spicis and the wyne is comen anoon
They ete and drynke & when this was at ende
Vnto the temppl as reson was they wende
The seruise don they haue that day
What nedith you to reherce here aray
Eche man may wel that a kyngis feste
Hath plente to the moste and to the leste
And deyntees mo than be in my knowyng
And after soper goth this nobyl kyng
To se this hors of brass with al the route

Of lordis and of ladies hym about
Such wondryng was therof this hors of bras
That sethen the grete sege of troye was
There as men sayd such an hors also
Ne was ther such a wondryng as was tho
But finally the kyng hath asked the knyght
The vertu of this courser and the myght
And prayde to telle hym his gouernaunce
The hors anon gan to tripe and daunce
Whan that this knyght leyde hond on his reyne
And sayde sire ther is nomore to sayne
But if yow list to ryden ony where
Ye muste trille a pyn that stont in his ere
Whiche I shal you telle betwix his elbo
Ye moot nempne hym to what place also
Or to what auntre ye list to ryde
And whan ye come there ye list abyde
Eyth hym descende and trille another pyn
For therin lith the effect of al the gyn
And he wol doun descende and do al your wil
And in that place he wolde abyde stil
Thogh al the worlde hadde the contrary swore
He shal not thens be dryue ne bore
And or if you list bidde hym thens goon
Trille this pynne and he wol vanysshe anon
Out of the sighte of euery maner wight
And come ayen be it be day or nyght
What that yow list clepyn hym ayen
In suche a gyse as I shal to you seyn

Gesbene me and you and that right sone
Ride when you list ther is nomore to done
Enfourmed whan the kyng was of the knyght
And hath conceyued in his wit a right
The maner and the fourme of al this thing
Ful glad and blithe was this nobyl kyng
Reperyng vnto his reuel as before
The bridyl is in to the tour ybore
And kept among his iewels leef and dere
The hors vanyssheth I not in what manere
Out of her sighte ye gete nomore of me
But thus y lete in lust and in iolite
This Cambuscan his lordis festeyng
Tyl wel nygh the day he gan to springe
The noyce of digestioums the sleep
Gan ov hem wynke & bad hem take kepe
That muche mete and labour wol haue reste
And with a galpyng mouth he hem alle keste
And sayde it was tyme to lye a doun
For blood was in his domination
Therfore blood natures frend quod he
They thankyn hym galpynge by two by thre
And euery wight gan drawe hym to his rest
As sleep hem bad and took it for the best
Here dremys shul not be told for me
Ful were here heedes of sumosite
That causeth dreme of whiche ther is no charge
They slepyn til it was pryme large
The moste part but yf it were Canace

She was ful mesurable as Dommey he
For of her fader hadde she take her leue
To go to reste sone aftir it was eue
Her list not appalled forto be
Ne oy the moroll vnsesteliche for to se
And slept her firste slesp and awook
For suche ioye she in hir mirrour took
Bothe of here ring and of hir myrrour
That twenty tyme she chaungith colour
And in her slesp for here impression
Of hir mirrour she hadde a vision
Wherfore or the sonne gan vp glide
She clepid vp her maistresse here beside
And sayde that her list forto aryse
Thyse olde Dommey that ley gladly wyse
As her maistres answerde here anoy
And sayde Madame whethir wol ye goon
Thus erly for folk leey alle in reste
I wool quod she aryse for me leste
No lengir slepe but walkey aboute
Her maistresse clepith Dommey a greet route
And vp they rysey wel ey or twelue
Vp risith fresh Tanace her selue
As rody and brighte as the yong sonne
That in the ram is ey degrees y ronne
No higher was she whan she redy was
And forth she walkith esely a pas
Arayd after the lusty seson soote
Lightly forto play and walkey on foote

Mot but .x. or .vj. of her meyne
And in a trenche ferre in a parke goth she
The vapour whiche fro the erthe glode
Makith the sonne to seme wody and broody
But nouertheles it was fair of sighte
That it made alle her hertis for to lighte
What for the seson and the Morwynge
And for the foulis that she herde synge
For right anon she wiste what they ment
Right be here songe and knewe al here entent
The knotte why that euery tale is tolde
If it be taried til last be colde
Of hem that haue it harkened after yore
The sauour passith and euer lenger the more
For sulsamnes of prolixite
And by the same reson thinkith me
I shulde vnto the knotte condescende
And make of hir walkynge an ende
A mydde a tre for drede as whyte as chalk
As Canace was pleynge in her walk
Ther sat a falcon ouer her hedy ful hye
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
That al the wode resowned of her crye
And eteth hadde her self so pitouslye
With both her wyngis til the rede blood
Ran endlong the tre as she stood
And euer in one she cryde al wey & shright
And with her bek her self she pyght
That ther nas tigre nor cruel beste

That dwellith other in wode or in forest
That wolde haue wept yf he were coude
For sorowe of her shriche alwey so lowde
For ther was neuer yet man on lyue
Yf that he coude a faucon wel deserue
Or herde of suche another of feirnes
As wel of plumage as of gentilnes
Of shap of al that mighte reherse he
A falcon peregryn than semed she
Of fremdy londy and euermore as she stoody
She swolwedy nolde & nolde for lak of bloody
Til wel nygh is she falley fro the tre
This faire kyngis doughter Canace
That on her fynger haar the queynte rynge
Thorowe whiche she vnderstoody wel euery thinge
That ony foul may in his ledey seyn
And coude answere in his ledey agayn
She hath vnderstonde what this faucon seyde
And wel nygh for routhe she deyde
And to the tre she goth ful hastely
And on this faucon lokith ful pytously
And heldy her lappe a broody for wel she wiste
The faucon muste falle fro the wriste
What that it swolwedy nere for lak of bloody
Alonge while to wayte where she stoody
Til at the laste she spak in this manere
Vnto the hawke as ye shul after here
What is the cause yf it be forto telle
That ye be in this furial peyne of helle

Quod Canace vnto this hauke aboue
Is this sorow of deth or ellis of loue
For as I wold thyse keen the causis two
That causith most a gentil herte wo
Of other harm it reckith not to speke
For your self vp on your self wolde wreke
Whiche that preuyth wel that other ire or drede
Mot be encheson of your cruel dede
Syn that I se non other wight you chace
For loue of god so do your self grace
Or what may be your help for west ne est
Sall I nayre or nold bidy nor best
That ferde with hym self so pitously
Ye sle me with your sorow verily
I haue of you so gret compassion
For goddis loue com fro the tre adoun
And as I am a kynges doughter trewe
If that I verily the causis knewe
Of your disese yf that it lay in my myght
I wolde amende it or it were nyght
As wis help me grete god of kynde
And herbis shal I right ynowe fynde
To hele with your hurtis hastely
Tho shright this faucon more pitously
Than euer she did and fyl to grounde anon
And lith aswowne as ded as ony stoon
Tyl Canace hath in her lappe y take
Vnto tyme she gan out of her swowne awake
And after that she out of swoun gan braide

Right in her halkis ledy thus she sayde
That pyte remyth sone in gentil herte
Feling is simylitude in peynes smerte
Is prouyd alday as men may se
As wel by work as by auctorite
For gentil herte kidith gentilnesse
I se wel that ye haue of my distresse
Compassioun my faire Canace
Of veray wommanly benignyte
That nature in your principles hath set
But for no hope forto save the let
But forto obeye to your herte free
And forto make other be waar be me
As by the whelp chastisedy is the lioun
Right for that cause and that conclusioun
Whyle that I haue leyser and spaas
Myn harmy I wil confesse er I pass
And euer whyle that on her sowh tolde
That othir wepte as she to water wolde
Til that the faucon hadi hir be stille
And with a sigh thus she saidi her wille
There y was bredi allas that day
And fostridi in a roche of marbyl gray
So tenderly that no thingi aylidi me
I ne wiste what was aduersite
Tyl I coude fle ful hye vnder the sky
Tho dwellydi a tarcelet me faste by
That semedi welle of al gentilnes
Al were he ful of treson and falsnes

That is Vnspidy vnder humble cheve
And vnder hue of trouthe in suche manere
Vnder plesaunce and vnder besy peyne
That no wight wolde haue wendy he coude feyne
So depe in greyn he diedy his colours
Right as a serpent hidith hym vnder flourys
Til he may see his tyme for to byte
Right so this godys of loue this Ipocryte
Doth so his seryuoyns and his obeysaunces
And kepith in semblaunce al his obseruaunces
That sowneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is al the feyr aboue
And vnder is the corps suche as ye woot
Suche was this Ipocrit hoote colde and hoot
And in this wyse he seruidy his entent
That saue the fende nomay wist what he ment
Til he so longe hadde wept and compleynedy
And meny a yeer his seruise vnto me feynedy
Til that my herte to pitous and to nyce
All Innocent of his cowardy malice
For ferdy of his deth as thoughte me
Vp on his othis and his faverte
Graunte hym loue vp on this condicion
That euermo myn honour and my renoun
Were sauedy hoole pryue and apert
This is to seyn that aftir his desert
I yaf hym al my herte and al my thought
Body woot and he and other wyse nought
And tolde his herte in change of myn for ay

But soth is saidy gooy seth is many aday
A trelbe Wight andy a theef thinke not oy
Andy Whay he sald the thingy so fer agoy
That J grauntidy hym my loue
In suche aggyse as y haue saydy aboue
Andy yeue hym my trelbe herte as fre
As he swoor he yaf his herte to me
Anoy this tigre ful of doubilnesse
Fil oy his knees With so gret humblenesse
With high reuerence andy as by his chere
So lik a gentil louer in manere
So rauysshedy as it semedy for ioye
That neuer Troylus ne Paris of Troye
Jasoy certis ne noy other may
Syy lameth Was that alder first begay
To louey elbo as Britey folk beforn
Me neuer sith that first may Was borny
To ony Wommay Were she neuer so Wyse
So payntidy he his chere at poynt deuyce
As Wel his Wordis as his contenaunce
Andy so J louedy hym for his obeisaunce
Andy for the trolbthe J demedy in his hert
That yf so Were that ony thingy hym smert
Al Were it neuer so lite andy J it Wiste
Me thoughte J herde deth at my herte elbiste
Andy shortly so ferforth this thingy is Went
That my Wil Was his Willis instrument
This is to sey my Wil obeyedy to his Wil
In alle thingy after that reson fyl

Keping the boundis of my worship euer
Me neuer hadde y thing so leef ne leuer
As hym godd woot ne neuer shal nomo
This lasted lenger than a yeer or two
That I supposed of hym no thing but goodd
But finally thus at the laste it stoodd
That fortune wolde that he muste departe
Out of that place whiche I was inne
Where me was woo it is no questioun
I can not make of it discripcion
For o thing dar y telle boldly
I knowe what the peyne of deth is therby
Suche harm I mette that he ne mighte me leue
So on a day of me he took his leue
So sowfully eke that y wende verily
That he hadde felt as muche sowe as I
Whan that I herde hym speke & sawe his hewe
But neuertheles I thoughte he was so trewe
And eke that he repayre shulde agayn
With ynne a litil while soth to sayn
And resoun wolde eke that he moste go
For his honour and ofte it fallith so
That I made vertu of necessite
And took it wel syn it nedes moste be
As I best myghte I hidd fro hym my sowe
And took hym be the honde seint John to howe
And I sayde thus lo I am youris al
Bothe suche as I haue be to you and shal
What he answerde nedith not to reherse

Who can say bet than he that can do Wers
Whan he hath al sayd than hath he doon
Therfore behoueth hym to haue a long spoon
That shal ete With a fende thus herde I say
So atte laste he muste forth his Way
And forth fleith til he com there hym leste
Whey it cam hym to purpos for to reste
I trowe he hadde the text in mynde
That al thing repeyrith to his kynde
Gladith hym self thus seyn men as I gesse
Men loue of propir kynde newefangilnesse
As briddis doon that men in cagis fede
For they thou nyght & day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage feyre & softe as silk
And yeue hem suger hony bred and mylk
Yet right anon as his dore is vp
He With his feet spurneth down his cup
And to the Wode he Wol and Wormes ete
So newefangil ben they of her mete
And loue nouel trees of proper kynde
No gentilnesse of blood may hym bynde
So ferde this Tarcellet allas the day
Though he Were gentil born fresh and gay
And goodly for to se humble and fre
He sawe vp on a tyme a kyte fle
And sodenly he louyd this kyte so
That al his loue is clene fro me go
And hath his trouthe falsid in this Wyse
Thus hath the kyte my loue in his seruise

And I am lost without remedy
And with that word this fauon gan to cry
And swouned eft in Canaces arm
Great was the sorow for the haukis harm
That Canace and alle her women made
They nyste how they myghte the fauon glade
But Canace hom bereth her in her lappe
And softely in plasteris gan her wrappe
There as she with her teth hadde hurt her selue
Wold any not Canace but herbis delue
Out of the grounde and make plastris newe
Of herbis precious and fyne of hewe
To hele with the hauke fro day to nyght
She doth her besines and al here myght
And by her beddis hed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettis blewe
In signe of trouthe that is in women seen
And al without the mewe y peyntid green
In which were peyntid al thyse false foulis
As been thyse tidiffis tarcellis and owlis
Right for despyt were peyntid her besyde
Spies on theym forto crye and to chyde
Thus lete I Canace her hauk kepyng
I wol as now nomore spelke of her pleyng
Til it come eft to purpos forto sayn
How that this fauon gat her loue agayn
Repentyng as the story telleth vs
The mediacion of Cambalus
The kyngis sone of which I zou tolde

But hens forth I wol procesſe holde
To ſpeken of auenturis & of batayllis
That yet was neuer herd ſo grete meruayllis
Firſt y wol you telle of Cambuſcay
That in his tyme many a cyte way
Andy aftir wyl y ſpeke of algarſif
Hold that he way Theodora to his wif
For whom ful ofte in greet peril he was
Ne hadde he be holpyn be the hors of bras
Andy aftir wol I ſpeke of Camballo
That faught in liſtis with bretheren two
For Canace or that he myghte here wynne
Andy there I lefte I wol ayen begynne
Apollo whirlith vp his chare ſo high
Til that gody Mercurius the ſligh
Here endith the ſquyeris tale.
Andy begynneth the Marchantis prology.
Depynge & waylinge ane & other ſowh
I knowe I nough bothe euen & eek a morowh
Quody the marchaunt andy ſo doth other mo
That wedded be I trowh that it be ſo
For wel I woot it fareth ſo be me
I haue a wyf the worſte that may be
For though the feendy coupledy to here were
She wolde hym ouermacche y dar wel ſwere
What ſholde I you reherce in ſpecial
Her high malice ſhe is a ſhrewe at al
Ther is a longy andy a large difference
Betwix griſildis grete pacience

And of my wyf the passyng crueltè
Were I vnbounde also mot I thè
I wolde neuer efte comè in thè snare
We weddid men lyue in sorowe and care
A say who so wol and he shal fynde
That y say soth be same Thomas of Inde
As for the more part I say not al
God shilde that it sholde so be fal
A good sir coost I haue weddid be
Thyse monethis two and nomore parde
And yet I trowe he that hath al his lif
Weddid be though men wolde hym ryf
Into the herte ne coude in no maner where
Telle so muche sorowe as I nowe here
Coude telle of my wyues cursidnes
Nowe quod our ost marchaunt so god you blesse
Syn ye so mykil konne of that art
Ful hertely I pray you tel vs part
Gladly quod he but of myn owen sore
For sory herte I telle may nomore

Here endith the prologe.

And begynneth the Marchauntis tale.

Somtyme ther was dwellynge in lumbardye
A worthy knyght thatborn was at pauy
In whiche he liuyd in gret prosperyte
And he.veer a wyfles man was he
And folowyd his bodily delyt
On women was his hool appetyt
As wol thyse folis that ben sengler

And why that he was passid he yere
Were it for holinesse or for dotage
I say not but suche a grete corage
Hadde this knyght to be a wedded may
That day and nyght he doth al that he may
To aspye where he myghte wedded be
Praying our lordy graunting that he
Myghte onys knowe that blissful lif
That is betwix ay husbonde and his wyf
And forto lyue vnder the holy bondy
With whiche godi first may and womañay bondy
Loy other lif sayde he is worth a bene
For wedlok is so esy and so clene
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus sayde this olde knyght that was so wyse
And certeinly as sothe as godi is kyngy
To take a wyf it is a glorious thingy
And namely why a may is oldy and hoor
They is a wyf the fruyt of his tresoor
Thay shulde he take a yongy wyf & a feir
Oy whiche he myghte engendre hym ay heir
And lede his lif in ioye and in solace
Where as thyse bacheleres syngey allas
Whey that they synde ony aduersite
In loue whiche that is but childis vanite
And trewly it sit wel to be so
That bacheleres haue ofte peyne and woo
Oy brotil groundy they bilde brotilnesse
They synde frelte why they wene stidfastnesse

The lyue that as a lordy or as a lefe
In libertee andy vnder noy areeſt
There as a wedded man is in eſtaat
Liueth his lif bliſſful andy ordinate
Vnder the yok of mariage I bounde
Wel may his herte in ioye & bliſſe habounde
For who can be ſo buxum as a wyf
Who is ſo trewe who is ſo trentif
To kepe hym ſeek andy hool andy is his make
For weel or woo ſhe wol nat hym forſake
She is nat wery hym to loue andy ſerue
Though he lye bedrede til he ſterue
Andy yet ſome clerkis ſayn it is not ſo
Of whiche Theophraſte is on of tho
What force theygh Theophraſte doth lye
Ne take no wyf quod he for huſbondrye
As forto ſpare in houſholde thyn eyptence
A trewe ſeruaunt doth more diligence
Thy goody to kepe than doth thy ſelf wyf
For ſhe wol clayme half part al her lif
Andy yf that thow be ſeek ſo gody me ſaue
Thy lewey frendis or a trewe knaue
Wol kepe the bet than ſhe that waytith ay
After thy goody andy hath do meny a day
But take no kepe of ſuche vanyte
Do fy Theophraſte andy herkien me
A wyf is goddis ziſte verily
Al other maner ziftis hardely

As londis rentis pasturis and comune
Or othir yeftis meuable of fortune
That passey as a shadow on a wal
But drede not yf I playnly speke shal
A wyf wil laste and in thy hous endure
Wel lenger than the liste pauenture
Mariage is a ful greet sacrament
Who that hath no wyf is but shent
He liuyth helples and is al desolat
I speke of folk in seculer astat
And herkeny why y say not this for nought
The wommay is for mannys help y wrought
The high god whan he hadde Adam makid
And salw hym allone bely nakid
God of his grete goodnesse sayde thay
Let vs nowh make ay help to this may
Lik to hym self and thay he made eue
Here may ye se and here by preue
That a wyf is mannys help & his comfort
His paradyse terrestre and his disport
So buxum and so vertuous is she
They muste nedis liue in vnite
O flesh they be and of o blood I gesse
Not but one herte in wyl and in distresse
A wyf a saynte mary benedicite
How mighte a man haue ony aduersite
That hath a wyf certis I can not sey
The blisse that is betwix hem tweyn
Ther may no tunge telle it or herte thynke

If he be poure she helpith hym to ſwynke
She kepith his goodȝ & wastith it neuer a del
And al that her husbondȝ luſt she likith wel
She ſaith not onys nay whan he ſaith ye
Do this ſaith he al redy sire ſaith she
O blisful ordre o wedlok precious
Thou art ſo merȝ andȝ eek ſo joyous
And ſo comendedȝ andȝ appruedȝ eke
That euery man that holdeth hym worth a leek
Vp on his bare knees oughte al his lif
Thankingȝ his godȝ that hym ſent a wyf
Or elles praye godȝ hym forto ſende
A wyf to laſte to his liues ende
For than his lif is ſet in ſikirneſſe
He may not be diſceyuedȝ as ȝ geſſe
So that he worke aftir his wyues rede
Than may he boldely bere vp his hede
They be ſo trewe/andȝ therto eke ſo wyſe
For whiche yf thou wolt worche as the wyſe
Do alwey as the woman wol the rede
Lo how Jacob as thyſe clerkis rede
Be goodȝ counſel of his moder rebekk
Bondȝ the kiddis ſkyn aboute his nekk
For whiche his fadris benyſon he wan
Lo Judith as the ſtory wel telle can
Be wyſe counſel she goddis peple kepte
And ſlew hym Olofernes whyle he ſlepte
Lo how Abigayl be goodȝ counſel that she
Sauedȝ her husbonde Nabal whan that he

Shulde haue be ſlayn and lokie hyſter alſo
Be goody counſel deliuered ou3 of Bo
The pryl of gody and made Mardoche
Of aſſuere enhaunced forto be
Ther is no thing in gre ſuperlatif
As ſaith Seneke aboue ay humble Wyf
Suffre thy Wyuys tunge as Caton bit
She ſhal comaunde and thou ſhalt ſuffre it
And yet ſhe Wylle obeye of curteſie
Wyf is keper of thy huſbondrye
Wel may the ſeeke may bewayle and Wepe
There as no Wyf is the hous to kepe
I warne the if thou Wyſely Wilt Wirche
Loue Wel thy Wyf as criſt loueth his chirche
If thou loueſt thy ſelf thou loueſt thy Wyf
Noman hatith his fleſſh but in his lif
He ſuffrith it and therfore bidde I the
Chaſſhe thy Wyf or thou ſhalt neuer the
Huſbonde and Wyf What ſo men iape or pley
Of Wordly folke holden the right Wey
They been knyt thermay no harm betide
And namely on the Wyuys ſide
For Whiche this January of Whiche I tolde
Conſideryth hath in his dayes olde
The luſty lif the Vertuous quyete
That is in mariage hony ſWete
And for his frendis on a day he ſent
To telle the effect of his entent
With face ſadd he hath his tale to hem toldd

He sayde frendis I am hoor and old
And almoste gon Woot at ny pittis brynke
Up on my soule somwhat moste I thinke
I haue my body folily dispendid
I blissid be god it shal be amendid
For I Wol be certeyn a Weddid man
And that in al the haste that I can
Unto som mayde fair and tender of age
I pray you shapith for my mariage
Al sodenly for I Wol not abyde
And I Wol fonde to aspye on my side
To Whom y may be Weddid hastely
But for as muche as ye be mo than I
Ye shul rather fache a thing espyed
Than I and Where me list best abyen
But o thing I Warne you my frendis dere
I Wyl noon old Wyf haue in no manere
She shal not passe.xij.yeer certayn
Old flesh Wolde haue yong flesh fayn
Set is a pyke than a pykerel
Better than olde beef is the tender keel
I Wol no Woman of elleuen yeer of age
It is but bene straw and greet forage
And eke thyse olde Wydowes god it Woot
They conne so mykyl craft of Wadis boot
So mykyl harm What that hem list
That With hem sholde I neuer lyue in rest
For sondry scolis maketh subtil clerkis
Woman of many a scole half a clerk is

But certeinly a yonge thinge may men gye
Right as a may With hondis warm Wepe plye
Therfore I say you pleynly in a clause
I Wol noy olde Wyf haue for this cause
For yf so were yf y hadde suche myschaunce
That I in here coude haue no plesaunce
Than sholde I lede my lif in a lontrye
And so streight to the deuel Whan y dye
Me childrey sholde I noy on here getyn
Yet hadde I leuyr houndis hadde me etyn
Than that myn heritage sholde falle
In straunge hondy & thus I telle you al
I doute not I Woot the cause Why
Men sholde Wedde and ferthermore Woot I
There spekith meny men of mariage
That Woot nomore of it than doth my page
For Whiche causis men sholde take a Wyf
Yf he may not chast be, be his Wyf
Take hym a Wyf With greet deuocion
Be cause of lesful procreacion
Of childrey to the honour of gody aboue
And not only for paramour ne for loue
And for they sholde lecherye eschue
And yelde her dette While it is nelbe
Or for that eche may sholde helpe othir
In myschief as the fustir shal the brothir
And lyue in chastite ful heuenly
But sires be your leue that am not I
For gody lethankid I dar make auawnt

I fele my lymys ſtarke and ſufficiaunt
To do al that a may behoueth to do
And any ſtrongy ynough to ride or goo
Though I be hoor and fare as doth a tre
That bloſmeth or that the tre grene be
A bloſmedy tre is neyther drye ne dedy
I fele me no where hoor but on myn hedy
My herte and my hymes is ay grene
As lauer that thorwh the yer is ſene
And ſithnys ye haue herdy al myn entent
I pray you that to my wyl ye aſſent
Diuers men diuerſly hym tolde
Of mariage meny enſamplis olde
Some blamedy it ſome preyſidy it certeyn
But at the laſte ſhortly forto ſeyn
As alday falleth altercacion
Betwix frendis in diſputacion
Ther fyl a ſtrif betwix his bretheren two
Of whiche that on was clepidy placebo
Placebo sayde o January brother
To you telle I this tale and to non other
Ful litil nede hady ye my lordy ſo dere
Counſel to aye of ony that is here
But that ye be on ſo ful of ſapience
That you ne liketh for your high prudence
To weyue fro the wordy of Salamon
This wordy sayde he to vs euerichon
Worke al thingy be counſel thus sayde he
And thay ſhalt not thou repente the

But though Salamon spak suche a word
Myn owen dere brother and my lord
So wysely god my soule bryngе at reste
I holde your owen counsel for the beste
For brother myn of me take this motyf
I haue be a courtmay al my lyf
And yet god woot though y vnworthy be
I haue stonde in ful gret degre
Aboute lordis in ful gret astaat
Yet hadde I neuer with noy of hem debaat
I neuer contraried hem trewly
I woot wel that my lord any more than I
What that he seith I holde it ferm & stabil
I say the same or othir thing semblable
A ful gret fool is ony counselour
That seruith a lord of high honour
That dar presume or onys thynke it
That his counsel shold passe his lordes wit
May lordis be no folis be my fay
Ye haue your self spoken here to day
So high sentence so holy and so wel
That I consente and conferme euerydel
Your wordis and al your opinion
Be god ther is noman in this toun
Me m ytaille coude better haue sayd
Crist holdith hym of this ful wel payd
And trewly it is an high corage
Of ony may that stepe is in age
To take a yong wyf for be my fader leyf

Your herte hongreth hp on a holy pry
Doth nowe in this mater as you lest
For finally I holde it for the best
Justinus that ay sat ful stille and pryde
He right on this wyse to Placebo sayde
Nowe brother myn quod he be pacient I pray
Syn ye haue sayd herkyn what I say
Seneck among other wordis wyse
Saith that a may ought hym right wel auyse
To whom he yeueth his goody or his catel
And sithnes I ought me auyse right well
To whom I yeue my goody a wey fro me
Wel more I oughte for to auyse me
To whom I yeue my body for alwey
I warne you wel it is no childis play
To take a wyf without auysement
Men muste enquerry this is myn assent
Whether she be wyse sobre or dronkelewe
An out goar or othir wey a shrewe
A chidar or a waster of thy goody
Riche or poure or of maners woody
Al be it so that no man fynde shal
Noon in this worlde that trotteth hool in al
Ne may ne lest suche as men can deuyse
But nauerthelees it ought ynowe suffyse
With ony yf so were that she hadde
Moo goody vertues than vicis hadde
And al this axedy leyser to enquere
For goody it woot I haue wept ful many a tere

Ful prykely syme I hadde a Wyf
Parfe who so wol a wedded mannys lyf
Certeyn I fynde it but tost andy care
Andy obseruaunces of alle blisses bare
Andy yet godys Wook myn neyghebours aboute
Andy namely of Wommen meny a route
Sayn that I haue the muste stedfast Wyf
Andy eek the mekeste one that lerith lyf
But I Woot best Where Wringith me my sho
Ye may for me right as ye like do
Auisith you ye be a may of age
Holde that ye entren in to mariage
Andy namely With a yongy Wyf e a feir
Be hym that made Watir erthe andy heir
The yongeste may that is in al this route
Is besy ynough to bryngе it aboute
To haue a Wyf alone but trusteth me
Ye shul not plesen hire only yeris thre
This is to sayn to do hir plesaunce
A Wyf axeth ful meny an obseruaunce
I pray you that ye be not auyl apayde
Welle quod this January hast thou sayde
Straw for thy seneck andy for thy prouerbis
I counte not a paner ful of herbis
Of scole termes Wyser men than thou
As thou hast herdy hath sentidy right nowh
To my purpos Placebo What sey ye
I sey it is a cursidy man quod he
That lettith matrimony sikirly

And with that word they risyn sodenly
And been assentid anon that he sholde
Be wedded whan hym list and whan he wolde
The stantesye and the besy curiousnesse
Fro day to day gan in the sothe impresse
Of January aboute his mariage
Many fair shap and many fair visage
Ther passith thorwh his herte nyght be nyght
As who so took a mirrour polisshed bright
And set is in a comyn market place
Than sholde he se many a figure pace
Be this mirrour and in the same wyse
Gan January in his thought devyse
Of maydens whiche duellid ther beside
He wiste not where he might abyde
For though that on haue beaute in her face
Another stont so in the peplis grace
For her sadnesse and her benignyte
That of the pepyl greet loys hadde she
And som were riche and hadde hadde name
But nathelees betwix ernest and game
He atte laste appoynted hym on on
And lett alle othir fro his herte gon
And chose her on his owh auctorite
For loue is blynd alday and may not se
And when he was in his bedde brought
He portrayed in his herte and in his thought
Her fressh beaute and her age tender
Her myddyl smal & her armys longh & slender

Her wyse gouernaunce & her grete gentilnesse
Her wommanly beryng and her sadnesse
And when he was on her condescendid
Hym thought his thought might not be amendid
For whan he hym self concludyd hadde
Hym thought euery other mannys wit so hadde
That impossible it were to replye
Ayens his chois this was his fantasie
His frendis sente he to at his instaunce
And prayde hem to do hym that plesaunce
That hastely they wolde to hym come
He wolde abregge her labour al and som
Medith nomore for hym to go ne ryde
He was appoyntedy there he wolde abyde
Placebo cam and elle his frendis some
And alderfirst he bad hem alle alone
That noy of hem noy argumentis sholde make
Ayens the purpos whiche that he hadde y take
Whiche was plesaunt to godys sayde he
And trewe ground of his prosperite
He sayde ther was a maiden in the toun
Whiche that of beaute hadde grete renoun
Al were it so she was of smal degre
Suffisith hym her yoldthe and her beaute
Whyche mayde he sayde sholde be his wyf
To lede in ese and holinesse his lif
And thanke godys that he myghte haue her al
That no wight with his blisse parten shal
And prayde hym to labour in this nede

And shapeth that he stylleth not to spede
For thay he sayde his spirit was at ese
Thay is quod he no thyng me may displese
Saue o thing prickith me my conscience
The whiche I wol reherce in your presence
Ye haue herd said ful long sithens a goo
Thermay nomay haue parfit blisse eld
This is to sey in erthe and eek in heuyn
For they he kepte hym fro the synnes seuyn
And eke from eueriche braunche of that tre
Yet is ther so parfyt prosperite
And so gret ese and lust in maryage
That euer I am agast now in myn age
That I shal lede so merry a lif here
For sithen very heuen is bought so dere
With tribulacion and gret penaunce
How shold I lyue in suche plesaunce
As alle wedded men doon with her wyues
Come to the blis there crist eterny on lyue is
This is my drede as yet my brethren eldey
Assoylith me this question y you prey
Justinus whiche that hatid his sely
Answerd anon right in his iapery
And for he wold his longe tale abregge
He wold non auctorite a legge
But sayde sir yf ther be non obstakyl
Other than this god of his hieghe miraklyl
And of his mercy may so for you wirche
That er ye haue your rightis of holy chirche

Ye may repente of Weddidy mannys lyf
In Whiche ye saye there is no stryf
Andy ellis gody forbede but yf he sente
A Weddidy may grace hym to repente
Wel ofter rather than a sengil may
Andy therfore the beste rede that I cay
Dispeyrith you not but haue in memorye
Paraventure she may be your purgatorye
She may be goddis mene andy goddis Whippe
That shal make your soule in to heuyn slippe
Slifter than ay arowb doth out of a bowbe
I hope to gody her after shul ye knowbe
That ther nys noon so sweet felaship
In mariage ne memory shal be
But that hit may be your saluacion
So that ye vse it as skil is andy reson
The lustis of your Wyf temperatly
Andy that ye plese her not to amerously
Andy that ye kepe you elie from other synne
My tale is doon for my Wit is thynne
Beth not agast here of my brother
But lete vs Wade fro this mater to another
The Wyf of bathe yf ye haue vnderstonde
Of mariage Whiche I haue in honde
Declared hath ful Wel in litil space
Fareth nowb Wel gody haue you in his grace
Andy With this he With his brother
Hath take her leue andy eche of hem of other
For Whey they sawh it muste nedis be

So they wrought be slyghte and by treté
That this mayde whiche that may highte
As hastely as that they myghte
Shal wedded be vnto January
I trowe it were you to longe to tary
If I you tolde of every escrit and bond
Be whiche she was sessed in his lond
Other forto harke of her riche aray
But finally comyn is the day
That to chirche bothe been they went
Forto receyue the holy sacrement
Forth comyth ỹ preest with stole aboute his neck
And lad hir be like Sarra or Rebek
In wisedom and trouthe of mariage
And sayde his orisons in his visage
And crouchid hem & bad god sholde hem bles
And made al siker ynow with holines
Thus been they wedded with solempnyte
And at the feste sittith he and she
With other worthy folk vp on the deys
All ful of ioye and blisse is the paleys
And ful of instrumentis of and vitayl
The moste deyntous of alle Itayl
Before hym with instrumentis of suche a soun
That Orpheus of Thebes or Amphioun
Ne made neuer suche a melodye
At every cours cam loude mynstralsie
That neuyr Joab trompid forto here
Ne eyther he Theomodus half so clere

Nowthelees whan the cyte was in doute
Bacchus the wyn hem schenkith al aboute
And venus loldh vpon euery wight
For January was becomen hir knyght
And wolde bothe assayen his corage
In libertee eke as in mariage
And with here fierbrondy weth hir hondy aboute
Daunsith before the bryde al aboute
And certeynly I dar wel sayy nyght this
Emenius that gody of weddyngy is
Hadh neuyr in his lif so mery a weddidy may
Holdy thold thy pees thou poete Marcian
That writist vs that ilke weddyngy mery
Of hir philogye andy of hym Mercurye
And of songis that the Musis songy
So smal andy eke the penne andy eke the tonge
Forto discriuen of this mariage
Whan tender youthe hadde weddidy stoupingy age
Ther is suche that it may not be weryte
Assay you self andy than may ye wyte
If that I lacke or none in this mater
May that sit with so benigne chere
Here to be holdeny it semedy a fairye
Quene hester lokidy neuyr with suche ay ye
Oy assuere so meke a loke as she
I may you not deuyse al hir beaute
But thus muche of hir beaute telle I may
That she was lik the bright morolh of day
Fulfillydy of beaute andy of plesaunce

This Januarye is ravysshyd in a traunce
At every tyme he lokkid in her face
But in his herte he gan her manace
That myght in his armys he wolde her streyne
Harder than Paris euer dede Eleyne
But natheles yet hadde he gret pyte
That that myght offende hir muste he
Andy thoughte allas o tender creature
Nowe wolde gody she myghte wel endure
Al my corage it is so scharp andy kene
I am agast she maye not sustene
But gody forthede y dede al my myght
Nowe wolde gody it were hoye nyght
Andy that the nyght wolde laste euermo
I wolde al this peypl were ago
Andy finally he doth al his labour
As he best myghte sauyng his honour
To haste hem fro the mete in subtil wyse
The tyme cam that resoy was to ryse
Andy aftir that men daunsidy andy deanli saste
Andy spicis al aboute the hous they caste
Andy ful of ioye andy blisse is euery man
Alle but a squier that highte Damyan
Whiche carf before the knyght many a day
He was so ravysshyd on his lady May
That for the verey peyne he was nygh wood
Almost he swelti & swownyd there he stood
Whey he salh her daunce with a ring on hir hand
So fressh she was andy therto so liftandy

And to his bedy he wente hym hastely
Nomore of hym at this tyme speke I
But there I lete hym wepe ynogh & pleyne
Til fresh may wol welle on his peyne
O perlous fire that in the bedstraw bredith
O familier foo that his seruice bedith
O seruaunt treytour fals holy helle
Lyk to the adder slygh & in thy bosom bitrelle
God shilde vs alle from your acqueyntaunce
O January dronkey in pleysaunce
O mariage se holb that thy Damian
Thy owen squier & thyn owen borry man
Entendith for to do the a lelonye
God graunte the thyn harny to aspye
For in this worlde nys woos pestilence
Thy ay homly foo alday in thy presence
Parfourmyd hath this day his arke diurne
No lenger may the body of hym seiourne
The orisont as in that latitude
Nighe with his mantel that is so derk & rude
Gan fasto sprede the empyspery aboute
For whiche departith is the lusty route
Fro January with thank on euery side
Homy to their housis lusty they ryde
There as they do thingis as hem list
And when they se her tyme they go to reste
Sone after this hastely this January
Wolde go to bedde he wolde no lenger tary
He deynteth Ipocras clarry and hernage

Of ſpicis hoot to entrede his corage
And mery a lettuary hadde he ful fyn
Suche as the auncian monk dan Conſtantyn
Hath writen in his book of coytu
To ete hem alle he wold no thing eſchew
And thus to his priuy frendis ſayd he
For goddis loue as ſone as it may be
Let voyde al this hous in curteys wyſe ſone
Men dronken and the trauers dreſſed anon
This knyght was brought to bedde as ſtille as ſton
So haſtily January it moſte be don
And whan the bed was with the preſt bleſſed
Out of the chambir hath euery wight hym dreſſed
And January hath faſte in armys take
His freſſh may his paradyſe his make
He lulleth here and kiſſeth her ful ofte
With the buſtillis of his berd vnſofte
Lik to the ſkyn of a fillh ſharp as breere
For he was ſhaue al newe in his manere
He rubbith her vpon her tender face
And ſayde thus allas I moſte trespace
To you my ſpouſe and you gretly offende
Or tyme com that I wyl down deſcende
But natheles conſideryth this quod he
Ther is no workman what euer he be
That may both werche wel and haſtely
This wolde be do at leyſer parfitly
It is no force how longe that we pleye
In trouth in wedlok couplidy be we tweye

And J blissidy be the yolk that We been yme
For in our actis We mollde do no syme
A man may do no syme With his Wyf
Ne harte hym self With his owen knyf
Nolde haue We leue to pleye vs be the lasse
Thus labouryth he til the day gan dasse
And than he takith a sop in fyn clarre
And up right on his bedde sittith he
And after that he sangy ful lowde and clere
And kissith his Wyf & makith Wanton chere
He Was al coltissh and ful of Pagery
And ful of Jargon as is a flecked pye
The slak skyn aboute his necke shakith
While that he songy so chauntidy he & crakith
But godi Woot What may thoughte in her hert
Whan she hym sawe up sitting in his shorte
In his nyght cappe and With his necke lene
She preysith not his pleyynge Worth a bene
Than sayde he thus my restyngy Wol J take
Nolde day is come J may no lenger Wake
And down he leyde his hedy & slept til pryme
And after Whan that he sawe his tyme
Up risith January and fresh may
She holdith hir chamber til the fourthe day
As vsage is of Wyuys for the beste
For euery labour sumtyme must haue reste
Or ellis longe may he not endure
This is to say no liuys creature
Be it fish or bryd beste or man

Wold Wol I speke of this squyer damyan
That languyssith for loue as ye shul here
Therfore I speke to hym in this manere
I say o sely Damyan allas
Answere to this demaunde in this cas
Hold shalt thou thy lady fressh may
Telle thy Woo she Wol alwey say nay
Eke yf thou speke she Wyl thy Wo bewreyn
God be thy help I can no better seyn
This sik Damyan in Venus grete fier
So brennyth that he dieth for desir
For Whiche he puttith his lif in auenture
No lenger myghte he in this Wyse endure
But priuely a penner gan he bowre
And in a letter Wrote al his sorow
In maner of a compleynt or a lay
Vnto his fressh and fair lady May
And in a purs of silk hynge it on his shirt
He hath yput and y leyd it at his herte
Thus hath January Wedded fressh may
And the mone as I vnderstond that day
Out of taure Was in the Crabbe glidyn
So longe hath she in her chambir bidyn
As custom is vnto thyse nobles alle
A bride shal not eten in the halle
Til dayes four or three atte leste
Passid be thay let hir go to feste
The ferthe compleet fro noone to noone
Whan that the high masse Was doon

In halle sat this January and may
As fresh as is the brighte somerys day
And so befyl that this goode may
Remembrith hym vpon this dampay
And sayde saynte mary holde may this be
That Dampay entendeth not to me
Is he ay sik or holde may this betyde
His squiere Whiche that stoode hym besyde
Eyanon hym be cause of his sikenesse
Whiche lettith hym to do his besinesse
Noy other cause myghte make hym dare
That me forthinkith quod this January
He is a gentil squyer be my trouthe
Yf that he deyde it were harm and routhe
He is Wyse discreet honest and secre
As ony may I Woot of his degre
And therto manly and seruysable
And forto be a thrifty may righte abyl
But astir mete as sone as euer I may
I Wyl my self Visite hym and may
To do hym al the comfort that I can
And for that Woord hym blissith euery man
That of his bounte and of his gentilnesse
He Wolde so comforte hym in sikenesse
His squier for it Was a gentil dede
Dame quod this January take goode hede
That astir mete ye With your Wommen alle
Whan ye haue be in chamber out of this halle
That alle ye go to se this dampay

To do hym disport he is a gentil man
And telleth that I wol hym visite
Have I no thing but restith me a lite
Anon with this word he gan to hym calle
A squier that was marchal of his halle
And tolde hym certeyn thinges what he wolde
This fresh may hath streyght her wey holde
With alle her women vnto this damyan
Down he his bedside anon sat she than
Confortyng hym as goodly as she may
This damyan whan he his tyme say
In priuy wyse his purs and eke his bille
In whiche that he writyn hadde al his wille
Hath put in to hir honde withoutyn more
Saue that he sighed right wonderly sore
And softly to hir right thus sayde he
Mercy and that ye discouer not me.
For I am ded yf that this thing be kyd
This bille hath she in her besom hyd
And wente hir wey ye gete nomore of me
Vnto January comyn eke me is she
And on his beddis side sat ful softe
He taklith hir and kisseth hir ful ofte
And leyd hym down to slepe and that anon
She feyned as that she muste goone
There as ye wot euery wight most nede
And when she of this byl hath take hede
She rente it vnto cloutis and atte laste
In the priuy softly hath she it caste

Who ſtudieth nowe but fayre freſh may
Andy doun he January ſhe lay
That ſlepte til the cold hath hym wakidy
Anon he preyde her to ſtrype her nakidy
He wolde of here he sayde haue ſum pleſaunce
He sayde her clothes doth hym aumbraunce
Andy ſhe obeyeth he ſhe leef or loth
But leſt that precious folk with me he wroth
Hold that he wroughte y dar you not telle
Or whether he thoughte it paradyſe or helle
But J lete hem worche in her wyſe
Til aunſongy andy that he muſte aryſe
Were it he deſtyne or he auenture
Were it he influence or he nature
Other in conſtillacion that in ſuche aſtat
The heuyn ſtoody that tyme fortunat
Was forto put a bil of venus werkis
For al thing hath tyme as ſayn clerkis
To ony wommay forto gete her loue
J ay not ſey but grete gody aboue
That knoweth noy acte is anſeleed
He demyth al for J wol holde my pees
But ſoth it is holde that this freſſh may
Hath take ſuche impreſſion that day
Of pyte of this ſik may Damyan
That fro hir herte she ne deyue may
The remembraunce forto do hym eſe
Certeyn though whom this thing diſpleſe
Here recke not J hym aſſure

To loue hym best of ony creature
Thogh he nomore hadde than his shert
And alle was pyte and tender herte
Here may ye here hold excellent fraunchyse
In Women is Whan they hem nayold auyse
Som tiraunt ther is as ther be many on
That hath ay herte as hardy as ony stoon
Whiche Wold haue leet hym sterue in the place
Wel rather than haue graunted hym grace
And hem reioysed in her cruel pryde
And reckid not to be an homicide
This gentil may fulfilled of al pyte
Right so of her hondy a lettre made she
In Whiche she graunted of her verry grace
Ther lacketh nought but only day and space
Where that she myghte to his lust suffyse
For it shal be right as he Wol deuyse
And Whan she saw her tyme vpon a day
To visite this damyan goth this fresh May
And subtilly a leitre douy she thriste
She taketh hym by the hondy & harde him eWiste
So secretly that noman it Wiste
And bad hym be al hool and forth she Went
To January Whan he for her sent
Vp risith damyan the nexte morowe
Al passid Was his siknes and his sorowe
He kembith hym & proynyth hym & pikith
He doth al that his lady lust and likith
And eke to January he goth as lowe

As ayr ede a dogge for the bolle
He is so plesaunt to euery may
For craft is al Who so that it cay
That euery Wight is fayne to teche hym goody
And fully in his ladies grace he stoody
Thus lete I dampay aboute his nede
And in my tale forth I Wol procede
Som clerkis holdey that felicite
Hit stont in delit and therfore he
This nobil January With al his myght
In honest Wyse as longeth to a knyght
Shoop hym to lyue ful delicíously
His holdsing his array as honestly
To his degre Was made as a kyngis
Among other of his honest thingis
He hadde a gardyn Wallith al With stoy
So feir a gardyn Wot I nolDher noy
For out of doute I verily suppose
That he that Wrodo the romaunce of the Pose
Ne coude of it the beaute Wel deuyse
Ne priapus ne myghte not suffise
Though he be godo of gardyns for to telle
The beaute of the gardyn and of the Welle
That stoody vnder a lauvrk al Wey greene
Ful ofte tyme kyng pluto and his quene
Proserpina and al her feyrye
Disporten hem and make melodye
Aboute that Welle and daunsedy as men tolde
This nobyl knyght this January the olde

Suche deynte hath to walkyn and to pleye
That he wol suffre no wight to bere the key
Saue he hym self of the smale wiket
He haar alwey of siluer a clicket
With the whiche wan he list vnshit
And whan he wolde paye his wyf his dette
In somer seson thyder wolde he go
And May his wyf and no wight but they two
Of thingis that were not to a kedde
They in the gardeyn parfourmed haue e spedy
And in this wyse meny a mery day
Lyuen this January and fresh may
But wordly ioye may not alway endure
To January ne no wordly creature
O sodeyn hap o fortune variable
Lik vnto the scorpioun vnstabil
That flaterst with thy hed whey thou wilt stinge
Thy tayl is deth thorow thyn enuenymynge
O brotel ioye o thou swete poysoun queynt
O thou monster that subtilly canst peynt
Thy gestis vnder hele of stedfastnesse
That thou disceyuest both more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus disceyued
And haddist hym for thy frend resceyued
And now thou hast bereft hym both his yen
For sorow of whiche he desireth dien
Allas this January that is so free
Amyd his lust and his prosperite
Is now woxen blynde and al sodenly

His deth therfore desireth he vtterly
And therwith all a feer of Jelosie
Lest that his wyf shal falle in som folye
So brent his herte that he wolde fayn
That som may bothe hym & here lady sleyn
For neuer after his deth ne his lyf
Ne wolde he that she were loue ne wyf
But euer lyue in clothis blake
Sool as the turtyl that hath lost his make
But atte laste aftir amonthe or tweye
His sorwe gan to swage as I you seye
For he wiste it may non other be
He pacientely took his aduersite
Saue out of doute may he not forgon
That he ne was Jelous euermore in on
Whiche ielousye was so outrageous
That neyther in halle ne in other hous
He nolde suffre here for to ryde ne go
Ne in non other place neuyr the mo
But yf that he had hondy on here alwey
For whiche ful ofte wepith fresh may
That louyth Damyan so benignely
That she muste othir deye sodenly
Or ellis she muste haue hym atte leste
She waytith when her herte wolde to breste
Vp on that othir side this Damyan
Pe comyn is the sorwfullist man
That euer was for neyther nyght ne day
Ne myghte he speke a word with fresh may

As of his purpose of none suche mater
But yf that January muste it here
That hadde ay hondy ay eye ouyr mo
Andy nathelees he waityng to andy fro
Andy priuy signys wiste he what she ment
Andy she knelb of the same his entent
O January what myght the auaylle
Though thou mightist se as fer as ship doth sayl
For as goody blyndy is disceyuedy to be
As to be disceyuedy whan a man may se
Lo argus whiche that hadde an hundrid yey
For al that euer he coude poure or pryn
Yet was he blent andy I woot so be mo
That wenyn that it is nothingy so
Passe ouyr is an ese I sey nomore
This fressh may of whiche I spak of yore
In warny wey hath printidy this cliket
That January haar of the smale wiket
Be whiche knbo this gardyn ofte he went
Andy dampay that knelb here entent
The cliket countirfetidy priuely
Ther is nomore to sey but hastely
Som wonder be this cliket shal be tide
Whiche ye shal here yf ye wil abyde
O nobyl ouyde soth sayst thou gody woot
What sleighte it is though it be longe & hoot
That he nyl fynde it bp m somy maneve
Sy pyramus andy tysbe may men here
Though they were kept streyt longe ouyr al

Thy bery accordidy wolbryngy thorow a thal
Ther is noy coude haue foumde fache a fleighte
But nolb to purpos or that dayes .viij.
Were passidy of the moneth of Juyl be fyl
That January hath aught so greet a thyl
Thowgh eggyngy of his thyf hym forto pleye
In his gardyn e no thighe but they tweye
That in a morolb vnto this may saidy he
Rise vp my thyf my loue my lady fre
The turtelis voys I herde my spouse swete
The thynter is goon with alle his raynes wete
Com forth with thyn yen columbyne
Nolb sayrer beey thy brestis thay is thyne
The gardyn is closidy al aboute
Com forth my swete spouse out of doute
Tholb hast me thoundidy in myn herte thyf
No spot in the salb I in al my lyf
Com forth andy leet vs take our disport
I care for the my thyf e for my comfort
Suche olde lelde wordis vsidy he
Dy Dampan a signe made she
That he sholde go before with his eliket
This Dampan hath openedy the thyket
Andy in he stert andy sat in suche manere
That no thighe myghe it se ne here
Andy stille he sat vnder abusch anone
This January so blyndy is as a stone
With may in his hondy andy no thighe mo
In to this fresh gardyn is he go

And clappeth to the Wicket sodenly
Now Wyf quod he here keep but ye and I
That art the creature that I best love
For by that lord that sit vs alle above
I hadde leuyr right now dye on a knyf
Than the offenden myn owen dere Wyf
For goddis sake thynk how y the chees
Not for couetyse ne other good doutlees
But only for the love I hadde to the
And though that y be old ye may not se
Be to me trewe and I wol telle the Why
Certis thre thingis sholde ye Wynne ther by
First love of crist and to your self honour
And al myn heritage both toun and tour
I yeue it now makith chartres as now list
This shal be do to morow or the sonne rist
So Wisly god my soule bringe to blis
And I pray you of couenaunt ye me kis
And though I be ielous Wite me nought
Ye be so depe pryntid in my thought
That Whan I consider your beaute
And therwith al the vnlikelihede of me
I may not certis though I sholde dy
Forbere to keep out of your compny
For kepe love this is Withouten doute
Now kis me Wyf and lete vs Rome aboute
This fresshe may Whan she the Wordis herde
Benignely to January answerde
But first ye forward she began to Wepe

I trust quod she a soule forto kepe
As wel as ye and also myn honoure
And of my wyfhode that tender floure
Which that I haue assured in your hond
Whan that the preest to you my body bond
Wherfore I wol answere in this manere
With the leue of you my lord so dere
I praye to god that yf ye euer se that day
That I ne sterue as soule as womman may
If euer I do to my kyn that shame
Or ellis I empeyre so my name
That I be fals and yf I do that lak
To strype me and put me in a sak
And in the next water do me drenche
I am a gentil womman and no wenche
Why spekе ye thus but men be euer vntrewe
And wommen haue repreef of you ay newe
Ye any non other comynycacion I leue
But spekе to vs of vntrust & vs repreue
And with that word she sadd where Damyan
Sat in a bush and knele he began
And with his fyngris signes made she
That Damyan shold de clymbe vp on a tre
That charged was with fruyt & vp he went
For trely he knewe al her entent
And euery signe that she coude make
Wel bet than January her olden make
For in a lettir she hadde told hym al
Of this matere how he werche shal

And thus I lete hym sitte in the pitte
And January with May pley and merye
Right was the day & bleu the firmament
Phebus of golde, doun his lemys hath sent
To gladen euery flour with his warmnesse
He was that tyme in gemmis as y gesse
But litil fro his declinacion
And cansere of Jouis exaltacion
And so it fill that in a bright morow tide
That in the garde on the ferthir side
Pluto that is kyng of the fairye
And many a lady in his compayne
Folowing his wyf the quene Proserpina
Whiche that hir rauyssh'd out of pina
Whilis that she gadrid flouris in a mede
In claudian ye may the stories rede
How in his grisly carte he hir fette
This kyng of feyre adoun hym sette
Vp on a benche of turues fair and grene
And right anone sayde he thus to his quene
My wyf quod he ther may no wight say nay
The experience prouith it euery day
The treson whiche that women do to men
Ten hundrid thousandy tellyn I can
Ensamples and of your vntrouth & brotilnes
O Salamon richest of alle riches
Fulfilled of sapience and of worldly glorye
Wel worthy be thy wordis in memory
To euery wight that wit and vrsom can

Thus preyseth he yet the hounte of many
Among a thousandy men yet fondy I one
But of alle Wymmen fondy he nemyr non
Thus saidy kyng y so knoweth your wickidnes
And also Jhesus Sirak as I gesse
Ne speketh of you but seldyn reuerence
A Wylde fyre and a corupt pestilence
So falle on your bodies yet to nyght
Ne se ye not this honourable knyght
Be cause allas that he is blindy and oldy
His olden may shal make hym Cokeoldy
Lo Where he sit the lechour in the tre
Now Wol I graunte of my magestie
Unto this olde blynde Worthy knyght
That he shal haue ayen his sight
Whan that his Wyf Wolde do hym vilonye
Thy shal he knowe al her harlotry
Both in reperf of here and other mo
Ye shal quod proserpina and Wol ye so
Now le my modeis sires soule I swere
That she shal redily excusen her
And alle Wommen after for her sake
Though they le in ony gilt y take
With face boldy they shal hem self excuse
And lere hem wiles that Wolde hem accuse
For lak of answer non of hem shul dyen
All hadde he seen a thingy With both his yen
Yet shul We so visage it hardely
And Wepe and swere and chyde subtilly

That ye shul be as lewdy as sele gees
That reckith not of here auctorytees
I woot wel this though this Salamon
Fondy of his women mo foolis than on
But though he ne fondy no goody woman
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus that in souereyn honte
Nys noy but gody that sittith in tryynte
Ey for very gody that nys but on
What make ye so muche of Salamon
What though he made a tempyl goddis hous
What though he were riche andy glorious
So made he eke a tempyl of false goddis
Hold myghte he do a thyng that more hady is
Parde as fayre as ye his name enplastre
He was a lechour andy eke ay ydolastre
And in his elde he very gody forsoolt
And yf gody ne hadde as saith the boolt
Asparyd for his fadris sake he sholde
Haue lost his regne rathir than he wolde
I yeue right nought of al the telonye
That he of women writith a butter flye
I am a woman nedis y muste spelke
Or ellis swelle til myn herte to breke
For sithen ye sey that we be Jangeleresses
As euer hool I moot brolke my tresses
I shal not spare nolb for no curtesie
To spelke hym harm that wolde vs telonye
Dame quod this Pluto be no lenger wroth

I wyll it by but ſith I ſwere myn oth
That I wyl graunte hym his ſighte agyn
My body ſhal ſtonde I ſay you certeyn
I am a kyngy it ſit me not to lye
And I a quene quod ſhe of the feirye
Her anſwer ſhal ſhe haue I vndertake
Lete vs nomo wordis here of make
For ſoth I wol you no lenger tary
Now lete vs turne ayen to January
That in the gardyn with his freſh may
Syngith ful merier than the Popyngeay
Now loue y beſt and ſhal and other noy
So longe aboute the aleyys is he goon
Tyl he was come ayens that pery
Where as this dampay ſittith ful mery
Ay bigh among the freſh leuys grene
This freſh may that is ſo bright and ſhene
Gan forto ſighe and ſayde allas my lyfe
Now ſire quod ſhe for aught that may betyde
I muſte haue of the peris that I ſe
Or y muſte dye ſo ſore longith me
To ete of the ſmale peris grene
Help for hir loue that is of heuen quene
I telle you wel a wommay in my plit
May haue in fruyt ſo gret an appetit
That ſhe may dien but ſhe of it haue
Allas quod he that I ne hadde here a knaue
That coude clymbe allas quod he
That I am blynd ye ſire no force quod ſhe

God wolde ye louchesauf for goddis sake
The pry wath ynne your armys forto take
For wel I woot that ye mystrauste me
Thay sholde I clymbe wel ynough quod she
So I my feet myght sette vp on your hals
Certis quod he thewf shal he no lak
Might I you helpyn with myn herte blod
He stoupith adoun and on his bak she stood
And aughte hir he a whiste and vp she goth
Ladyes I pray you he not wroth
I am not glose I am a rude man
And sodenly anon this damyan
Gan pulle vp the smok e in he thrugh
A greet tente a thrifty and a long
She sayde it was the merieste fytte
That euer in her lif she was at yet
My lordis tende seruith me nothing thus
He soldith ewisolde he swete Jhesus
He may not swynge worth a leek
And yet he is ful gentil and ful meek
This is leuyr to me than an eyrnsong
And whan that Pluto sawh that wrong
To January yaf ayen his sighte
And made hym se as wel as euyr he might
And whan that he hadde caught his sighte agayn
Me was ther noman of thing so fayn
But on his wyf his thought was euyr mo
Vp to the tre he caste his yen two
And sawh holh damyan his wyf hath dressid

In suche maniere as it may not be expressidy
But yf I wolde speke vncurteisly
Andy hy he yaf a wringe andy a cry
As deth the moder whan the childy shal dy
Out help allas harowe he gay cry
Her sowle almoste he gay to dy
That his wyf was shryuydy in the chery
O straunge lady hore what dost thow
Andy she answerde sire what eylith yow
Haue pacience andy reson in your mynde
I haue yow holpyn dy bothe your yen blinde
Up peril of my soule y shal not lyen
As me was taught to hele with your yen
Was no thingy let to make you to se
Thay forto strogil with amay in a tre
Goody woot y dede it in ful goody entent
Strogil quod he ye algate my it went
Stif andy wundy as ony helle
It was no wonder though her bely swelle
The smok on his brest lay so theche
Andy euer me thoughte he poyntidy on the brech
Cody you yeue lothe a shamys deth to dyen
He dide the so I salw it with myn yen
Andy ellis I behangidy be the hals
Thay is quod she my medicine fals
For certemly yf ye myghte se
Ye wolde not sey thyse wordes to me
Ye haue somy glymsinge andy no parfit sighte
I se quod he as wel as euer I myghte

Thankid be god with hothe myn yey two
And be my troweth me thought he did so
Ye may deme as ye list gode fere quod she
This thank haue I for I made yow se
Alas quod she that euyr I was so kynde
Now dame quod he lat al passe out of mynde
Comdoun my leef and yf I haue myssayde
God helpe me so as y am euyl apayd
But be my fader soule I wente haue seyn
How that this Damyan hadde by the leyn
And that thy smok he leyde vp on thy brest
Ye fire quod she yt may wene as ye list
But fire qd she a may that walkith of his sleep
He may not so sodenly wel take keep
Vp on a thing ne se it so parfitly
Tyl that he be wel adawed verily
Right so a may that longe blyndy hath be
Ne may not sodenly so sone wel se
First whyle his sighte is nedy comyn agayn
As he that hath a day or tweyne y seyn
Til that your sighte y fatelidy be a whyle
Ther may ful many a sighte yow begile
Wherfor I pray yow for be heuyn kyng
Ful meny a may wenyth to se a thing
And yet it is al another than it semyth
He that mysconceyueth ofte mys demyth
And with that word she lepte fro the tre
This January who is glady but he
He kisseth her and clippith hir ful ofte

And on her wombe he stroketh her ful softe
And to the halys hoom he hath her lad
Now gode men I pray you be mery and glad
Thus endith here my tale of January
God blisse vs alle and his moder Mary
¶ Here endith the Marchantis tale. And
begynneth the prologe of the wyf of Bathe.

Experience though noon auctorite
Were in this worlde is right ynow for me
To speke of woo that is in mariage
But lordis sith yȝ. wyten what was my age
Thankid be god that is eternal alyue
Husbondis at the chirche dore haue I had fyue
If I so oftey myghte haue wedded be
And alle were worthy men in here degre
But onys me was told not longe a go I wys
That crist wente neuer but onys
To weddynge in the Cane of galilee
That he the same ensaumpyl taughte he me
That I wedded sholde be but onys
Lo whiche a sharp word for the nonys
Besyde a welle Jhesus god and man
Spak in repreef of the samaritan
Thow hast had. v. husbondis sayd he
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thy husbond thus he sayde certeyn
What he mente therby I can not sayn
But that I axe why that the. v. man
Was not husbond to the samaritan

Holl many myghte he haue in maryage
But herde y neuer tellyn in myn age
Of this noumbre fery diffinicion
Men wolde deme and glose vp a doun
Wel I woot expresse without lye
That godly lady bis wyfe and multiplye
That gentil text can I wel vnderstonde
For wel y woot that myn husbonde
Sholde leue fader and moder and take to me
But of noumbre no mencion made he
Of bigamye or of Octogamye
Why sholde men spelke of it selonye
Lo here the wyse kyng Salamon
I trowe he hadde wyues mo than on
As wolde to god it leefful were to me
To haue refresshing half so ofte as he
Which a yefte of god hadde he for al his wyues
Woman hath suche that nowe on lyue is
God woot this nobyl kyng as to my witte
The firste nyghte hadde many a mery fytte
With eche of hem so wel was hym on lyue
Blissid be god for I haue had fyue
Of which I haue pleinly quit of the beste
Bothe of her nethir ende and eke her cheste
Diuers scolis maketh diuers clerkis
And diuers practik in many sondry werkis
Maketh the parfiter may to be sikerly
Of fyue husbondis scoling am I
Wel come the sixte whan that euer he shal

I wol hym not forsake no thing at al
Whey myn husbond is fro the worlde I goy
Sony cristen may shal wedden me anoy
For the apostel sayth that I am fre
To wedde a goddis half where it liketh me
He sayth to be weddid it is no synne
Settir it is to be weddid than to brynne
What recchith me though men say vilonye
Of shrewde lameth and of his bigamye
I woot abraham was a ful holy man
And eke Jacob as fer as euer I here can
And eche of them hadde mo wyuys than two
And meny another man also
Where can ye say in ony manere age
That euer god defendid mariage
Be expresse wordis I pray you tel me
Or where comandid he euer virginite
I woot as wel as ye it is no drede
The apostil whey he spak of maydenhede
He sayde that ther of precept had he noon
Men may counsel a wommay to be oon
But counsel is no maner comandement
He puttith that in our Jugement
For hadde god comanded maydenhede
Than had he dampned wedding out of drede
And certis yf ther were no seed I solde
Virginite what sholde therof growe
Paule durste not comaunde atte leste
A thing which his maister yaf non heste

The dart is set vp on Virginite
Cast who so may who vernyth best let se
But this Wonder is not take of euery Wight
But there as god Wol yeue it of his myght
I Woot Wel the apostel Was amayde
But natheles though he Wroot and sayde
He Wolde Wel euery Wight Were as he
All is but counsel to Virginite
And forto be a Wyf he yaf me leue
Of indulgence so it be not to repreue
To Wedde me yf that my make dye
Withoute exception of bigamye
Al Were it good no Woman forto tolleche
He mente in his bed or in his colleche
For paril it is fyre and tow to assemble
Ye knolle What this ensample may resemble
This is al and som he heldy Virginite
More parfit than Wedding in freelte
Freelte clepe I but yf he or she
Wolde ledyn her lyf in chastite
I graunte it Wel I haue non enuy
Though maydenhede preferre bigamy
It liketh hem to be cleen in body and goost
Of myn estate I Wyl make no boost
Ful Wel I knolle a lordy in his husholdy
Hath meny a tessel of siluer and of goldy
Som teen of tre and don her lordy seruise
God clepith to hym folk in sondry Wyse
And eche hath of gody a proper yefte

Ech may as hym liſte to ſhifte
Virginite is a greet perfection
And continence eek With deuocion
But arist that is of perfection the Welle
Sad not euery Wight he ſholde go ſelle
All that he hath and yeue it to the poure
And in ſuche Wyſe folowe hym and his loure
He ſpak to hem that Wil lyue parfitly
And lordmgis be youre leue that am not I
I Wol bestowe the flour of al myn age
In the actis & in the fruyt of mariage
Tel me also to What conclusion
Were membris maad of generacion
And of ſo parfit Wyſe a Wight ywrought
Trust me Wel they be not made for nought
Glose Who ſo Wol and ſey vp an doun
They Were made for purgacion
Of Vryne and of other thingis ſmale
Was eke to knowe a female from a male
And for no cauſe ellis ſay ye no
The experience Woot Wel it is not ſo
So that ye clerkis With me be not Wroth
I ſay thus they be made for both
That is to ſay bothe for office and for eſe
Of engendrure theruse We gon not displese
Why ſhulde not ellis myn in folkis ſette
That may ſhal yelde to his Wyf hir dette
Where With ſholde he make his payement
If he ne vſed his ſely inſtrument

They were they maad vpon a creature
To purge hym and eke to engendure
But I say not this as y you tolde
That euery wight that hath swiche harneys is holde
To go and vse hem in engendrure
Than sholde men of chastite take no cure
Crist was a mayde and shapp as a man
And many an holy saynt sith the world began
Yet liuyd they euer in parfit chastite
But I nyl enuye noon virginite
Lete hem with bredy of puredy whete refedy
And lete vs wyfen hoot barly bredy
And yet with barly bredy men telle can
Our lordy Jhesus refresshidy many a man
In swich astat as godly hath clepidy vs
I wyl vswere I am not precious
In wyf hoody wyl I vse myn instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous godly yeue me sorwe
Whether he wyl at eue or a morwe
Whan that hym list com forth and pay his dette
An husbondy wol y haue y wol not lette
That shal be bothe my dettour and my thral
And I his tribulacion with al
Duringe the whyle that I am his wyf
The power wol I haue during al my lif
Both of his propir body and nat he
Right thus the apostel tolde it me
And bad our husbondis forto loue vs wel

At this sentence me liketh euerydel
Ow sayd the pardoner and that anon
Now dame quod he by god and by saint John
Ye be ay nobyl prechour in this cas
I was aboute to wedde a wyf alas
What shold I bye it my self so dere
Yet hadde y leuer wedde no wyf this yere
Abyde quod she my tale is not begonne
Nay thou shalt drynke of another tonne
Or that I go shal sauour worse than ale
And when I haue told forth my tale
Of tribulacion that is in mariage
Of which I am expert in al myn age
This is to sey my self haue be the whippe
Than mayst thou chese whither thou wilt sippe
Of that tonne that y shal broche
Be ware of it or thou go to nygh approche
For I shal telle ensamplis mo than ten
Who so wol not be ware be othir men
By hym shal othir men corrected be
Thyse same wordis writeth ptholome
Rede in his almegeste and take it there
Dame I wyl pray you yf your wyl were
Sayde this pardoner as ye began
Tel forth your tale spare for noman
And teche vs yonge men of your practike
Gladly quod she sith it may you like
But that y pray to al this compayne
Yf that y spelle after my fantesye

As take not a greef of that I say
For myn entent is but forto play
Now seris than wol y telle you forth my tale
As euyr I muste drynke wyne or ale
I shal say soth thyse husbondis that I hadde
Thre of hem were goode and two were badde
Ymelle myghte they holde the statute
In whiche they were bonden vnto me
Ye woot well what I mene parde
As helpe me god so laughe what thet I thynke
Hold prevously a nyght y made hem to swynke
And be my faith I yaf of hem no stoore
They hadde me yeue her lond and her tresor
Me nedith not to do hem lenger diligence
To wynne her loue or do hem reuerence
They louedn me so wel be god above
That I ne tolde no deynte of her loue
A wyse woman wyl besy hir euyr in one
To gete her loue there she hath noon
But sith I hadde hem holly in myn hond
And aftir they hadde yeue me here lond
What sholde y take kepe hem forto plese
But yf it were for my profit or for myn ease
I yeldn hem so a werke be my fey
That many a nyght they songn wel a wey
The bacon was fet for hem I trowe
That som may hath in essex at donmowe
I gouernedn hem so wel aftir my lawe
That eche of hem ful blisful was and fawe

To kynge me ſeire thingis fro the feyre
Thy were ful feyn whan I ſpak to hem faire
For godys it woot I chidde hem ſpitouſly
Now herke how I kaar me properly
Ye wyſe wyues that can vnderſtonde
Thus ſholde ye ſpekyn & bere hem an honde
For half ſo boldely can ther noman
Swere and lye as a woman can
I ſay not this but ye wyues that ben wyſe
But yf it be whan they hem mys auyſe
A wyf yf that ſhe can her good
Shal bere hym on hond the cow is wood
And take witneſſe of her owen mayde
Of hire aſſent but herkenyth how I ſayde
Sire olde kaynard is this thyn array
Why is myn neyghebours wyf ſo gay
She is honourith where euer ſhe goth
I ſitte at hom and kepe no thriftey cloth
What doſt tho at myn neyghebours hous
Is ſhe ſo fair art thou ſo amerous
What wilt thou with a mayde benedicite
Sire olde lechour let thy japis be
And yf that I haue a goſſib or a frend
Wit outyn gilt thou chidiſt as a fend
If that thou walkiſt hom to her hous
Thou comyſt hom as dronke as a mous
Thou prechiſt on thy benche with auyl preef
Thou ſaiſt to me it is a gret myſchief
To wedde a powre woman for coſtage

And yf she be high and of riche parage
Thou saist that it is a fery turmentry
To suffre hir pryde and hir malencoly
And yf she be fair thou fery knaue
Thou saist that euery harlot wol her haue
She may no whyle in chastite abyde
That is assaylid on euery syde
Thou sayst som folk desire hir for riches
Some for our shap e some for our fairnes
And some for she can othir singe or daunce
And some for gentilnes or for daliaunce
Som for her hondes and leggys smale
Thus goth al to the deuyl be thy tale
Thou sayst men may kepe a castel wal
It may so longe assaylid be ouyr al
And yf she be foul thou sayst that she
Coueytith euery man that she may se
For as a spaynel she wol on hym lepe
Til she may fynde som man her to chepe
Me non so grey goos goth ther in the lake
As sayst thou be wyl without her make
And sayst it is an hard thing forto welde
A thing that noman wol his thank helde
Thus sayst thou lorel whan thou gost to bedde
And that no wyse man nedith forto wedde
Me noman that entendeth vnto heuyn
With wilde thundir dynt and fyre leuyn
I pray god moot thyn necke al to breke
Tho sayst a dropping hous and eek smoke

And chidynge wyues maketh men to flee
Out of her holsis at onys a benedicite
What eyleth suche an old man for to chyde
Thou sayst we wyues wyl our vices hyde
Til we be fast & than we wil hem shewe
Wel may that be a prouerbe of a shrewe
Thou sayst that men assis hors and houndis
They been assayed of dyuers stoundis
Basyns lauours or that men hem bye
Spoons stolis and alle other husbondrye
And so be pottis clothis and aray
But folk of wyues make non assay
Til they be wedded to old dotard shrewis
And than sayst thou wel our vices shewis
Thou sayst also that it displesith me
But yf thou wolt preyse my beaute
And but thou poure al day in my face
And clepe me fayre dame in euery place
And but thou make a feste that ilke day
That y was born and me fresh and gay
And but thou do me norish and honoure
And to my chamber with in my boure
And to my fadris folk and myn alies
Thus sayst thou olde chorle ful of lyes
And also for that our prentice Jankyn
For his crisp heris shynynge as gold fyn
And for he squiereth me bothe vp and doun
Yet hast thou caught a fals suspecion
I wyl hym not though thou were ded to morwe

Sat tel me this Why hidest thou with sowth
The keyes of thy cheste awey fro me
As wel it is my goody as thyn parde
What wenyst thou to make ay idiot of our dame
Nowth be that lordy that clepidy is saint Jame
Thowth shalt not bothe though thou were woody
Be maister of my body and of my goody
That oy thou shalt forgo magre thyn yen
What nedith it of me to enquere or pryen
I trowth thou woldist lokke me in thy cheste
Thou shouldist say gode boyf go where ye liste
Take your disport I wol leue no tales
I knowthe you for a trewthe wyf dame alis
We loue noman that takith kepe or charge
Where that he wol go and ly at our large
Of alle maner men blessidy mote he be
The wyse Astrologien dan Protholome
That saith right thus in his almegeste
Of alle men his wisdom it is the beste
That reckith not who hath the worldy in honde
Be this prouerbe thou shalt vnderstonde
Haue ye ynough what dar ye recke or care
Howth merily that other folkis fare
For certis olde dotardis be your leue
Ye shal haue queynte ynough at eue
Be thowth nauyr wroth for myn instrument
Though it be somtyme to a goody felawth lent
For he is to gret ay nygardy that wyl werne
A may to lighte a candel at his lanterne

He shal haue neuer the lasse light yerde
Haue thou ynough thou dar not pleyne the
Thou sayst also yf that he make hs gay
With clothing or with precious array
That it is peril of our chastite
And with sorow thou most enforcen the
And say thyse wordis in the Apostelis name
In habit made with chastite and shame
Ye women shul apparayle you quod he
And nat in tressid heer and riche perre
As perlis ne with gold ne clothis riche
After thy thought ne after thy fulliche
I wol not worche as moche as a gnat
Thou sayst thus I walke out as a cat
But who so wol serche the cattis skyn
They wyl the cat duelle in his yn
And yf the cattis skyn be slight and gay
She wol not duelle in his hous half a day
But forth she wol or ony day be dawed
To shewe her skyn and go a caterwawed
This is to say yf I be gay sir shrewe
I wol renne out my lovel forto shewe
Sire olde fool what helpith the to espien
Though thou pleye argus with his hundrid yen
To be my warde corps as he may best
In feith he shal not kepe me but me lest
Yet coude I make his berdy so mote I the
Thou sayst eek that ther be thingis thre
The whiche thingis troublen al the erthe

Andy that no Wight may ordeyne the ferthe
O lorde sire Jhesus shorte thy lif
Yet preche I shold andy saye ay hatefull Wyf
Reherydy is for ony of thyse myschaunsis
Sey ther nold none othir resemblaunsis
That may be like your parabilis vnto
But yf a sely Wyf be on of tho
Thold likneste eke a Romanys loue to helle
To harery londy there Watir may not dWelle
Thold likneste vs eek also to Wilde fire
The more it hurnyth the more it hath desire
To consume euery thing that brent Wold be
Thold sayste right as Wormys shendyn a tre
Right so a Wyf destroieth her husbonde
This knoWen they that been to Wyues bonde
Lordingis right thus as ye haue vnderstonde
Save y stikly myn olde husbondis on honde
Andy of other thinges both more andy lesse
Andy al Was fals but as I took Witnesse
Of Jankyn our childy andy of myn nece also
O lordy the pyne I dede hem andy the Woo
Ful giltelees ofte be goddis sWete pyne
For as ony hors I coude both byte andy Whyne
I coude pleyne though I Were in the gilt
Or ellis I hadde ofte tymes be spilt
Who so comyth first to the mylle first he grynt
I pleynedy first so Were our Weyes stynt
They Were ful gladdy for to excuse hem blyue
Of thing Whiche they neuer agiltidy her lyue

Of Wenches wolde I here hem ful fore ony hondy
Whey that for sike vnmeth myghte they stonde
Yet nilleth I his herte for that he
Wende that I of hym hadde so gret cheerte
I swore that al my walkyng out be myghe
Was for to spye wenches that he dighe
Vndir that colour hadde I mony a myrthe
For al suche thing was gyue vs in our birthe
Disceyt weppynge spynnynge god hath yeue
To women kyndely whyle that they lyue
And thus of o thing I may auaunte me
Alle ende I hadde the bettir in eche degre
By sleyghte or force or by sony maner thing
Or by continuel murmur or gnaschinge
Namely a bedde hadde they myschaunce
There wolde I chide and do hem no plesaunce
I wolde no lenger there abedde abyde
If that I felte his arm ouer my side
Til he hadde maad his raunson vnto me
Than wolde I suffre hym do his nyette
And therfore euery man this tale I telle
Wyn who so may for al is for to selle
With empty hondis men may no hawkis lure
For wymmynge wolde I as his list endure
And make me ther a feynedy appetit
And yet in bacon hadde y neuer delit
That made me that euer I wolde hem chyde
For though the pope hadde sitten hem beside
I wolde not spare hem at her owhery borde

For le my tonicle I quytte hem every Wonde
As helpe me gode omnipotent
Though right nolde I sholde make my testament
I olle hem not o Wonde but that it is quyt
I broughte it so aboute by my Wit
That they muste yeue it vp al for the lesse
Or ellis hadde we neuer le in reste
For though he lokide as Wilde as a lion
Yet sholde he fayle of his conclusion
Thay Wolde I say gode leef take kepe
How mekely lokith Wilkyn our sheep
Ye sholde be al pacient and meke
Com ner my spouse lat me ha thy cheke
And haue a Wete spicid concience
Sith ye so speke of iobbis pacience
Suffraith alwey syn ye can so Wel preche
And but ye do certeyn We Wol you teche
It is feir amay to haue his Wyf in pees
Oy of vs two muste bowe doutlees
And sith a may is euer more resonable
Than a Womay is ye moste be suffrable
What eyleth you to gruche and grone
It is for ye Wolde haue my quepnte a lone
Why take it lo haue it euerydel
Sir I shrewe you but ye loue it Wel
For yf I Wolde selle my bele chose
I coude Walke as fressh as a Rose
But I Wol kepe it for your owen toth
Ye be to blame be gode I say you soth

Suche maner worpis hadde we on honde
Nowe wol I spekke of my firste husbonde
My firste husbond was a Reuelour
Dis is to say he hadde a paramour
And I was yonge and ful of ragery
Stobery & strong and pliant as a pie
Wel coude he daunce and harpe smale
And synge as merry as ony nyghtyngale
Whan I hadde dronke a draughte of swete wyn
Metnilms the foule chorle the swyne
That with a staf berafte his wif hir lif
For she dranke wyne and I hadde be his wif
He sholde not haue daunted me so fro drinke
And after wyne on venus muste I thinke
For also siker as cold engendreth hail
A lecherous monyth muste haue a lecherous tail
In wynolent psone is no defence
This knowen lechours be experience
But lord crist whan it remembreth me
Upon my youthe and on my Jolite
It tikleth so myn herte rote
Unto thys day it doth my herte bote
That I haue had my worlde & my wyue
But age allas that al wol envenyme
Hath me berafte my beaute & my pith
Let go farewel the deuil go perwith
The flour is go ther is nomore to telle
The bren as I best may now muste I selle
But yet to wighte merry nowe wil I fonde

Now wyl I telle of my fourthe husbonde
I Sey he hadde in his herte a gret despyte
That I ony other hadde delyte
But he was quyte be godys and be seynt Jose
I made hym of the same wode a croce
Nat of my body in no soul manere
That certenly I made folk suche chere
That in his oldey grece I made hym frye
For angir and for verry Jelousye
Be godys in erthe I was his verry purgatory
For whiche I hope his soule be in glorye
For godys it woot he sat ful ofte and songe
Whan that his sho bitterly hym wrunge
Ther was no wight saue godys and he that wyste
In many wyse how sore I did hym tweste
He deyde whan I com fro Jherusalem
And lith I grauedy vnder the rode beem
Al is not his toumbe so curious
As was the sepulcre of hym Darius
Whiche that appelles wroughte subtilly
It is but wast to burye hym preciously
Let hym fare wel godys yeue his soule goodys reste
He is now in his grane and leydy in his cheste
Now of my fyfthe husbonde wol I telle
Godys lete her soulis neuer come in helle
And yet was he fyfthe to me the moste shrewe
That fele I on my ribbis reewe by rewe
And euer shal vnto myn endyng day
But in our bedy he was ful fresh and gay

And therwith al also he coude so wel glose
That though he hadde bete me on euery boon
He coude wynne my loue ayeyn anoon
I trowe I loued hym best for that he
Wold of his loue so daungerous vnto me
We wymmen haue yf that I shal not lye
In this mater a queynte fantesye
Wayte what thyng we may not lightely haue
Ther after wil we crye alday and craue
Forbede vs thyng and that desiren we
Preese on vs and than wil we flee
With daunger bitter we al our chaffare
Greet prees at market maketh dere ware
And to greet cheep is holden a febyl prys
This knoweth euery woman that is wyse
My fyfthe husbonde god his soule blesse
Which I took for loue and no richesse
He sumtyme was a clerk of Oxenforde
And hadde left scole and wente at hoom to boorde
With my gossib dwellynge in our toun
God haue her soule her name was alisoun
She knew my herte and eek my preuyte
Better than our parisch preest so mote I thee
To her bewreyed I my counsel al
For hadde myn husbond pissed ayens a wal
Or do a thyng that he shulde haue left his lyff
To her and also to another wyff
Whan that he wolde haue my bele chose
And to my self which that I loued wel

I wolde have told hys counsel anerydell
And so I did ful ofte god it woot
That made his face ful ofte reedy and hoot
For verry shame and blamed hym self that he
Hadde told to me so grete a pryvyte
And so be fyl that onys in a lente
So ofte tyme I to my gossib wente
For euer I loued to be gay alleday
And forto walke in March aprryl and May
Fro hous to hous to here sondry talis
That Jankyn clerk and my gossib dame alis
And I my self in to the feldis wente
My husbond was at london al that lent
I hadde the bettir leyser forto pleye
And forto se and ek forto be seye
Of lusty folk what wiste I where my grace
Was shapyn forto be or in what place
Therfore I made my visitacions
To vigilies and to processions
To prechinge ek and to pilgrymagis
To pleyis of myracles and to mariagis
And wered vp on my gay scarlet gites
Thyse wormys ne thise mothis ne thyse mytis
Vpon my parel frayde hem neuer a del
And wost thou why for they were vsed wel
Now wol I telle forth what happid me
I say that in the feldis walkid I
Til truly that I hadde suche daliaunce
This clerk and I what of my purueaunce

I spak to hym and sayde holde that he
If I were widdow he sholde wedde me
For certeyn I say you for no lotanes
That was I neuer without purueaunce
Of maryage ne of othir thyngis ask
I holde a mons herte not worth a leek
That hath but oon hool to sterte to
And yf that sayle thay is al I do
I lete hym on honde he hadde enchaunted me
My dame taughte me forsoth that sotilte
And eke I sayde y mette of hym al nyghe
He wolde a shamed me as I lay by nighe
And al my bedy was ful of fery blody
But yet I hope truly ye shul do me goody
For blody betokenyth gold as I was taughe
And al was fals I demed of him nighe naughe
But as I folowidy ay my dames lore
As wel of that as of othir thyngis more
And now sire lete se what sholde y sayn
Ah ha by god I haue my tale agayn
Whan that my fourthe husbondy was on bere
I wepte algate and made a sory chere
As wyuys mote yn for it is the vsage
And with my kercher I cleridy my visage
But for that I was purueyed of a make
I wepte ful lityl I dar vndertake
To chirche was my husbondy bern on morow
With neyghbours that for hym made sorow
And Jankyn our clerk was on of tho

As helpe me godȝ whan I shall hym go
After the leeue me thoughte he had a preye
Of leggis and feet so clene and so seyre
That al my herte I yaf vnto his holdȝ
He was I trowe twenty wynter oldȝ
But I was .xl. yf I shal sey the soth
But yet I hadde alwey a coltis toth
Sappe todiddȝ y was but that he cam me woer
I hadde the prynt of saint venus sel
As helpe godȝ I was a ful lusty on
And feir and riche and yongh e wel begoon
And trewly as my husbondis tolde me
I hadde the beste queynte that myghte be
For certis I am al fully venerian
In felinge and my herte is marcian
Venus me yaf my lust and likerousnesse
And marce yaf me my sturdy hardynesse
Myn ascendaunt was taure and mars therin
Allas allas that euer loue was synne
In folowynge ay myn inclinacion
Be vertu of my constillacion
That made me that I coude not withdrawe
My chambir of venus fro a goodȝ felaw
Yet haue I a marke of mars vp on my face
And also in another priuy place
For godȝ so wisly be my sauacion
I louyd neuer be non discrecion
But euer folowid myn appetit
Al were he longh short blak or whit

I took no kepe so that he liked me
How pore he was ne eke of what degre
What shold I say but at the monthis ende
This ioly clerk Jankyn that was so hende
Hath wedded me with grete solempnyte
And to hym yaf I bothe body and fee
That euer was yeue me therbefore
But afterward me repented it ful sore
He nolde suffre no thyng of my list
By gode he smote me onys with his fist
On the cheke for I rente out of his book a leef
That of the strook myn ere wext al deef
Stalworne I was as is a lyonesse
And of my tunge a verry jangelresse
And walke I wolde as I dide my dame before
Fro hous to hous al thought he had it sore
For whiche he ofte tyme wolde preche
And me of olde romaunce tales teche
How he simplicianes gallus lefte his wyf
And he forsook her terme of al his lyf
Not but for ones open by her say
Lokyng out of his dore vp on a day
Another wyf tolde he me he name
But for his wyf was at a someris game
Without his wyting he forsook her eek
And than wolde he vp on his bible seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiast
Where he comaundith and biddith fast
Men shal not suffre her wyues to wyle abouts

Who so lakketh his hous al of fabolles
And pryke his rynde fors ouer the fabolles
And suffrith his wyf to selle hatolles
He is worthy to be hongid on the galowes
But al for nought I set nat an halpe
Of alle his prouerbis ne of al his olde salde
Me I wolde not of hym correctid be
I hate hym that telleth his vices vnto me
And so do mo godi woot of vs thay I
This made hym woody with me al verily
I wolde not forbere hym in no caas
Nowe wol I say soth be saint Thomas
Why that I rente out of his book a leef
For which he smot me so that I was deef
He hadde a book that gladly wolde nyght & day
For his disport he wolde rede alway
He clepid it Valery and Theophraste
Atte which book he lough alwey faste
And eke therwas a clerk som tyme in Rome
A Cardinal that highte seynt Jerome
That made a book agayn Jouynyan
In which book therwas eke tertulay
Crisippus Tortula and helowis
That was Abbesse not fer fro Paris
And parabolis of wyse Salamon
Ouydes art and eek lokis many on
And alle thyse were bounden in on volume
And euery day and nyght was his custume

Whyn he hadde leyser and my vacacion
For al other Wordly occupacion
To rede on this book of Wicked Wyues
The lewd of hem mo legendis and liues
Than be of gode Wyues in the bible
For trustith Wel it is an impossible
That ony clerk Wol spekе godly of Wyues
But yf it be of holy sayntis lyues
Ne of non other Woman nauer ete mo
Who peyntyd the lyoun tel me Who
Begodi yf Women hadde Wreten storyes
As clerkis haue in her Oratoryes
They Wolde haue Writen of men more Wickidnes
Than al the marke of Adam may redresse
The childryn of Mercury and Venus
Been in her Workyng ful contrarious
Mercuri louith Wisedom and science
And Venus louith ryot and dispence
And for her dyuers disposicion
Eche fallyth in others exaltacion
That thus godly Wood Mercury is dissolate
In pisces Whyn Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth ther Mercury is reysid
Therfore Women of no clerk is preysid
The clerk Whan he is old and may nought do
Of Venus Workis not Worth his old sho
Than sitteth he down and Writeth in his dotage
That Women can not kepe her mariage
But now to purpos Why I tolde the

That I was lefyn for a book parde
Up on a nyghte Jankyn that was our syre
Radde on his book as he sat be the fyre
Of Eue first that for hir wickednes
Was al mankynde brought to wrecchidnes
For which that Jhesu crist hym self was slayn
That boughte vs with his herte blody agayn
Lo here expres of women may ye fynde
That womanys was the los of al mankynde
To redde he me hold Sampson loste his heris
Slepinge his lemman kit hem with her sheris
Through whiche treson loste he both his yen
Tho radde he yf that I shal not lyen
Of Hercules and of Dyanyre
That causith hym to sette hym self a fyre
No thyng forgat he the sorowful and the wo
That Socrates hadde with his wyues two
How Xantippa cast pisse vp on his hed
This sely man sat stille as he were ded
He wipith his hed no word dorste he sayn
But on the thunder stynte comyth rayn
Of Philip that was the quene of Crete
For shrewdnesse hym thought it swete
Ye spek no more it is a grisly thyng
Of her horrible lust and of her lykyng
Of Cleremystra for her high lecherye
That falsly made her husbond to dye
He redde it with ful good deuocion
He tolde me eke for what conclusion

Amphiorape at Thebes loste his lif
Myn husbonde hadde a legende of his wyf
Euphidery that for any ouche of gold
Hath pinely vnto the grekis told
Where that her husbonde hidde him in a place
For whiche he hadde at thebes a sori grace
Of lima tolde he me & of lucy
They bothe made her husbondis forto dy
That one for loue that other was for hate
Lyma her husbonde vpon a nyght late
Empoysond him for sothe was his so
Lucia likewyns loued her husbond so
For he sholde algatis ouhere thynkie
She yaf vnto hym such aloue drynkie
That he was ded or it was at mowth
And thus algate husbondis hadde sowth
Thanne tolde he me how that lacyuius
Compleyned how that sel may arrius
That in his gardyn growde such a tre
On which he saide how that his wyuis thre
Hanged hem selff for her hertis despitous
O leue brothir saidy thay this arrius
Zif me a plante of that blissid tre
And in myn gardyn plantid shal it be
Of latter date of wyuis hath he red
That some haue sleyn her husbondis a bed
And leet her lechour wyue hem al the nyght
Whilis that the corps lay in floor vpright
And some haue driue nailis in her brayn

[illegible] that they slepte & thus they haue hem slayn
[illegible] haue put hem poyson in her deynke
[illegible] harm thay herte may thynke
[illegible] with al he coude mo prouerbis
Thay in this worlde growe gras or herbis
Better is quod he thyn habitacion
Be with a lioun or with a dragon
Thay with a woman besynge sorto chyde
Better is quod he high in his roof abyde
Thay with ay angry wyf duellinge in his hous
They be so wicked and so contrarious
They haten that her husbondis loue ay
He sayde a woman cast her shame away
Whay she cast of her smok and ferther mo
A fair woman but she be chast also
Ys like a goldryng on a sowys nose
Who wolde leue or who wolde suppose
The wo that in myn herte was and pyne
And whan I salle that he wolde neuer fyne
To redyn on his cursid book al nyght
Al sodenly thre leuys haue I plight
Out of his book right as he redde and eek
I with my fist so took hym on the cheek
That in our fyre he fyl backward adoun
And he vp stert as doth a wood lioun
And with his fist he smot me on the hed
That in the flore I lay as I hadde be ded
And whan he salle hold stylle that I lay
He was agast and wolde haue fled away

Til atte laſt I out of my ſwowne abreid
O haſt thou ſlayn me fals theef I ſeid
And for my lond thus haſt thou murdred me
Or I be ded zit wol I onys kiſſe the
And neer he cam & kneled faire adoun
And sayde dere fadir I wete alisoun
As helpe me god I ſhal the neuir smyte
That y haue do it is thy ſelf to wite
Forgeue it me and that I the beſeke
And zit eft ſonys I hitte hym on the cheke
And ſaide theef thus muche I am bewreke
Now wol I dy I may no lenger ſpeke
But atte laſte wyth muche care and woo
We fil accordid be our ſelfyn two
He yaf me the bridil in my hond
To haue the gouernaunce of hons & lond
And aſtir of his tunge & of his hond alſo
And made hym brenne his book anoon to
And thanne whan I hadde gotyn vnto me
The maiſtrie & eelt the ſouereynte
And thanne he ſaide myn owen trewe wif
Doth as you liſt al the terme of your lyf
Kepe thin honour and eke myn aſtate
And after that day we hadde neuer debaat
God helpe me ſo I was to hym as kynde
As any wyff fro denmark in to ynde
And alſo trewe and ſo was he to me
I pray to god yat ſittith in mageſte
So blſſe his ſonle for his mercy dere

Here endeth the Wyff of Bathes prologe.
And here begynnyth her tale.

IN olde dayes of kynge Artur
Of whiche britons spekith gret honour
All was this londe fulfilled of fayrye
The elf quene with her ioly compaynye
Daunced ful ofte in many a greue mede
This was the olde opinion as I rede
I speke of many an hundrith yeris ago
But nowe can nomay se elphis mo
For nowe the grete charite and prayeres
Of limytours and eke of othir freris
That serchen every londe and every streme
As thicke as motis in the sonne beme
Blissinge hallis chambris kechenes and bowris
Cites burghis castellis and eek towris
Shoppis kernys shepens and dayries
This makith that ther be no fayries
For there as wont was to walke an elf
There walkith nowe the limytour hym self
In undermelis and in morownyngis
And seith his matyns and his thingis
As he goth forth in his limytacion
A womman may go saufely vp and down
Vnder every busshe or vnder every tre
Thre is none other incubus but he
And he ne wolde do hem ony dishonour
And so befil that this kynge Arthour
Hadde in his hous a lusty bacheler

That on a day cam ridynge fro the ryuere
And happid that allone as he was fary
He fand a mayde walkynge hym before
Of whiche mayde anon magre her hed
He bare by force byreft her her maydenhed
For whiche oppreſſion was ſuche clamour
And ſuche purſute vnto kyng Arthour
That dampned was this knyght to be ded
Be cours of lawe he ſholde haue loſt his hed
Paraduenture ſuche was the ſtatut tho
But that the quene and other ladyes mo
So longe praiden the kyng of grace
Til he his liff graunted in that place
And yaf hym to the quene al at her wille
To chese whether ſhe wolde hym ſaue or ſpille
The quene thanked the kyng with al her might
And after thus ſpak ſhe to the knyght
Whan ſhe ſawe her tyme vp on a day
Thou ſtondiſt yet in ſuche aray
That of thy lyf yet haſt thou no ſuerte
I graunte thy lyf yf thou canſt telle me.
What thing it is that women moſt deſiren
Be war and kepe thy necke from iren
And yf thou canſt not telle it anon
I ſhal the yeue yet leue forto goon
A twelfmonthe and a day to ſeche and to lere
A nſwere ſufficiaunt in this matere
And ſuerte wol I haue or that thou paſſe
Thy body forto yelden in this place

Woo was this knyght and sorowful he syghith
But he may not do al as hym liketh
And atte laste he chaas hym forto wende
And come ayeen right aé the paris ende
With suche answer as godi wolde hym purueye
And taketh his leue & wendeth forth his weye
He seketh euery hous and euery place
Where as he hopith forto fynde grace
To wite what thingi women louedi most
But he coude arryue in no coost
There as he myght fynde in this mattere
Two creaturis accordinge in fere
Some sayde women louedi best richesse
Some sayde honour sonj sayde Jolynesse
And ofte tymes to be wedded and to be wedi
Some sayde riche array sonj sayde lust a bedi
Some sayde that we be in herte most esidi
Whan we be flateridi and plesidi
He goth ful nygh the soth J wol not lye
A man shal best wynne vs with flaterye
And with attendaunce and with besines
Eey we y lintydi lotte more and les
And sonj sayde that we loue best
Forto be fre and do right as vs list
And that noman reprene vs of our vice
But sey that we be wyse and no thingi nyce
For truly ther is noon of vs alle
If ony wighe wol clawe vs on the galle
That we nel kykle for he saith vs soth

Offey and he shal synde it that it doth
For he be never so vicious with ynne
We wol beholden wyse and eken out of synne
And some sayde grete delit haue we
For to beholde stabil and eke seure
And in on purpos stedfastly to dwelle
And not to beleeue that men vs telle
But that tale is not worth a rake stele
Parde we women can no thing hele
Witnes on Myda wol ye here the tale
Ouide among other thingis smale
Sayde Myda hadde vnder his longe heris
Growynge vpon his hedy two assis eris
The whiche vice he hidde as he best mygthe
Ful subtilly from euery mannys sighte
That saue his wyf ther wyste of it nomo
He louyd her most and trustid her also
He prayde her that to no maner creature
She wolde telle of his foul disfigure
She swore hym that for al the worlde to wynne
She nolde do that velony ne synne
To make her husbonde to haue so foul a name
She wolde not it for her owyn shame
But natheles she thoughte that she deyde
That she so longe sholde a counsel hide
She thoughte it was so sore aboute her herte
That nedis sone wordy her moste a sterte
And sith she durste telle it to no man
Down to the marise faste she ran

Til she cam there her herte was in fyre
And as a bitore bondeth in the myre
She leyde her mouth vnto the watir doun
Beleeue me not thou watir with thy soun
Quod she to the I telle it and to no mo
Myn husbonde hath longe assis eris two
Nolw is myn herte al hool nolw is it oute
I myght no lenger kepe it out of doute
Here mowe ye se though we a tyme abyde
Yet out it muste we cam no counsel hyde
The remenant of the tale yf ye wil here
Redith Ouyde and there ye may it lere
This knyght of whom my tale is specially
When that he salw he mighte not come therby
This is to say what woman louen most
With ynne his breste so sorowful was his goste
But hoom he goth he mighte not soiourne
The day was come that homward moste he tourne
And in his wey as happid hym to ryde
In al his care vnder a forest syde
Where as he salw vpon a daunce go
Of ladys .xxiiij. and yet mo
Toward whiche daunce he drowe ful yerne
In hope that he sholde som wisdom lerne
But certeinly or that he cam fully there
Vanysshed was this daunce he nyste where
No creature salw he that trad lyff
Saue on the grene he salw sittyng a wyf
A fouler wight ther mighte noman deuyse

Agayn this knyght this olde wyf gan ryse
And sayde sir knyght herforth lith no way
Tel me what ye seke in your fay
Paraunture it may the better be
Thyse olde folk can muche thing quod she
My leue moder quod this knyght certeyn
I am but ded but yf that I can sayn
What thing it is that women most desire
Coude ye me wisse I wolde quyte wel your hire
Plight me thy trouthe here in my hond quod she
The nexte thing that I requyre the
Thou shalt it do yf it ly in thy myght
And I wol telle it you or it be nyght
Haue here my trouthe quod the knyght I graunte
Than quod she I dar wel make auaunte
Thy lyf is sauf for I wol stonde ther by
Upon my lyf the quene wol say as I
Lete se whiche is the proudest of hem alle
That werith othir kerchef or calle
That dar say nay that I wol the teche
Lete vs go forth without more speche
Tho rowned she a pistil in his here
And bad hym be glad and haue no fere
Whan they be comyn to the court this knyght
Sayde he kepte his day as he had hight
And redy was his answer for to haue sayde
Ful many a nobil wyf and many a mayde
And many a widow for that they be wyse
The quene her self sittyng as Justyse

Assembly keep his answer for to here
And afterward this knight was lodyn there
And that every wight was comaundid silence
And that the knyght shold telle in audience
What thing that worldly women loue best
This knyght stoode not stille as doth a beest
But to his question anon answerde
With manly voys that al the court it herde
My liege lady theme general quod he
Women desiren to haue souereynte
As wel of her husbondis as of hir loue
And for to ben in maistrye aboue
This is your most desire though ye wil me kille
Doth as you list I am at your wille
In al the court ne was ther wyf ne mayde
Ne widow that contraried that he sayde
But sayde he was worthy to haue his lyf
And at that word vpstert this olde wif
Whiche that the knyght sawe sittynge on the grene
Mercy quod she my souereyn lady quene
Er that your court departe as doth me right
I taught this answer vnto the knyght
For whiche he plighte me his trouthe there
The firste thing I wolde hym require
He wolde hit do yf it lay in his myght
Before this court than I pray the sir knyght
Quod she that thou me take vnto thy wyf
For wel thou wotist that I haue saued thy lyf
If I nere fals nere nay vpon thy fey

The knyght answerde and sayde wel a wey
I woot right wel that suche was my beheste
For goddis loue chees a nedde requeste
Take al my goody and lat my body go
Nay than quod she I shrewe bothe two
For though that I be foul oldy and poor
I wol not for al the metal and the oor
That vnder the grounde lith other aboue
But y thy wyf were and eke thy loue
My loue quod he nay parde my dampnacion
Allas that euer ony of my nacion
So foule sholde euer disperagedy be
But al for nought the ende is thus that he
Constreynedy was nedis muste he wedde
And take his olde wif and go to bedde
Now wolde som men sayn parauenture
For myn negligence I do no cure
To telle you the ioye and al the array
That atte feste was that ilke day
To whiche thing shortly I answer shal
I say there was no feste ne ioye at al
There nas but heuynes and muchel sorow
For priuely he wedded here by the morow
And al day after hidde hym as an owle
So wo was hym his wif lokidy so foule
Gret was the wo that the knyght hady in thought
Whey he was with his wif a bedde y brought
He walowith and he turnyth to and fro
His olde wif lay smylinge euer mo

And sayde o dere husbonde benedicite
Fareth euery knyght with his wyf as ye
Is this the lawe of kyng Artours hous
Is euery knyght of his loue so daungerous
I am your owen loue and eke your wyf
I am she whiche that saued hath your lyf
And certis yet I dede you neuer vnright
Why fare ye thus with me the firste nyght
Ye fare lik a man hadde lost his wit
What is my gilt for goddis loue tel me it
And it shal be amended yf that I may
Amended qd this knyght alas nay nay
It wol not be amended neuer the mo
Thow art so lothly and so olde also
And therto comyn of so lowe a kynde
That litil wonder is though I walowe & wynde
So wolde to god quod he myn herte wolde breste
Is this quod she the cause of your vnreste
Ye certeyn quod he no wonder it is
Nowe syre qd she I coude amende al this
Yf that me list or hit be dayes thre
So wel ye mighte kepe you vnto me
But for ye spekyn of suche gentilnes
As is descended out of olde riches
That therfore ye shulde be gentilmen
Suche arrogaunce is not worth an hen
Loke who is most vertuous alway
Pryuy and apert and most entendith ay
To do the gentilist dedis that he can

Take hym for the grettist gentilman
Firste wol we clayme of hym our gentilnes
Not of our eldres for her olde riches
For though they yeue vs al her heritage
For whiche we claymen to be of here parage
Yet may they bequede for no thing
To none of vs her vertuous leuynge
That made hem gentilmen callid to be
And bad hem folowe vs in suche degre
Wele can the wyse poet of florence
That hight dante speke of this sentence
Lo in suche manere ryme is dantis tale
Ful selde vp ryseth be his braunches smale
Prouys of man for god of his goodnes
Wol that of hym we clayme our gentilnes
For of our eldris may we no thing clayme
But temporel thing that may hurte & mayme
Eke euery wight woot this as wel as I
If gentilnes were planted naturally
Vnto a certeyn lynage doun the lyne
Priue and pert than wol they not fyne
To do of gentilnes the fair office
They might do no vilony or vice
Take fyre and lere it in to the derkist hous
Bitwix this and the mounte of Canacus
And lete men shitte the doris and go thenne
Yet wol the fyre as fair ly and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold
His office naturelly ay wol it holde

Up peril of my lif tyl that it dye
Here may ye se how that gentrye
Is not annexed to possessiony
Suche folk ne doth her operaciony
Alwey as doth the fyre in his kynde
For godys it woot men may ful ofte fynde
A lordis sone do shame and velony
And he that wol haue price of his gentrye
For he was lordy of a gentil hous
And hadde his eldris nobil and vertuous
And nyl hym self do no gentil dedis
Ne folowen the dedis of his auncetrys
He is not gentil be he duk be he erle
For vileyns sinful dedis maken a cherle
For gentilnes nys but the renome
Of thyn auncetris for her high bounte
Whiche is a straunge thing to thy persone
The gentilnes comyth fro godys alone
Thay comyth our verey gentilnes of grace
It was no thing he quedyn vs with our place
Thynkith how nobil as seith valerius
Was that Romayn Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouert roos to high noblesse
Redith Senek and redith eke Boece
There shul ye se expres that no drede is
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis
And therfore leue husbonde thus I conclude
Were it that myn auncetris were rude
Yet may the hye godys and so hope I

Graunte me grace to lyue vertuously
Than am I gentil when I begynne
To lyue vertuously and to abey fynne
And there as ye of pouerte me repreue
That high god on whom holly we beleue
In ful hertis pouerte chees to lede his lyf
And fyns euery man mayden or wyf
May vnderstonde that Jhesus our heuyn kyng
Me wolde not chese a vicyous lynynge
Glad pouert is a ful honest thyng certeyn
This wol Senec and other clerkis sayn
Who so that holdith hym paid of his pouert
I holde hym riche and he had not a shert
He that coueytith he is a ful poure wight
For he wolde haue that is not in his myght
But he p̄ nought hath nought coueytith to haue
Is riche al though ye holde hym but a knaue
Verey pouerte is ay high ioye properly
Juuenal spekith therof ful merily
The poure may whan he goth be the wey
Before the theuys he may synge and pley
Pouert is hateful good as I ges
A ful gret kynger out of besynes
A greet amender eke of sapience
To hym that takith it in pacience
Pouerte is this al though it seme elenge
Possessioun that noman wolde gladly chalenge
Pouerte ful ofte whan a may is lowe
Makith his god and eke hym self to knowe

pouert a spectakil is as thinkith me
Thowh whiche he may his lery frendis se
And therfore sir sith therin ye be greuedy
Of my pouert late me nomore be repreuedy
Nowh sire of elde also ye repreuydy me
And certis sire though noy auctorite
Were in the book the gentil of hauour
Sayy that men sholde ay olde wyf do honour
And clepidy fader for their gentilnes
And auctours shal I fynde as I ges
Nowh there as ye say I any foul and oldy
Thay drede ye not to be made Cokeoldy
For filthe elde and foul so mot I the
Bery grete wardeyns vpon chastite
But natheles sith I knowhe your delit
I shal fulfille your wordly appetit
Thes nowh qdy she ony of thyse thingis elleye
To haue me olde and foul til that I deye
And be to you a trewhe humble wyff
And neuer you displese in al my lyff
Or ellis ye shal haue me yongy and feyr
And take your auenture of the repeyr
That to your hous shal be by cause of me
Or in sony other place may wel be
Nowh chees whether that ye likith
This knyght auysith hym and silith
But at the laste he sayde in this maneve
My lady my loue and my wyf so dere
I put me fully in your wyse gouernaunce

Chese it youre self whiche may be more pleasaunce
And most honour to you and to me also
I do no force whether of the two
But as you liketh it sufficeth to me
Than I haue gote of you the maistrye quod she
Sey I may chese and gouerne you as me list
Ye certis wyf quod he I holde it for the best
Kys me quod she we be no lengre wroth
For be my trouthe quod she I wol to you be both
That is to say both fair and eek good
I pray to god that I muste sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wyf syn the worlde was newe
And but I be to morwe as fair to sene
As ony lady Empereresse or quene
That is betwixt the est and the west
Doth with my lyf and deth as you list
And so they slepte til it was morwe gray
And tho she sayde what it was day
Cast vp the curtey loke how it is
And whan the knyght sawe verily al this
That she so fair was and so yong therto
For ioye he hent hir in his armys two
His herte was bathed in a bath of blis
A thousand tyme aswithe he gan hir kis
She obeyed hym in euery thing
That might do hym pleasaunce or likyng
And thus they lyue vnto her lyues ende
And parfyt ioye as Ihu vs sende

Wyssondis meke yongh and freyh a lede
And grace to our kyue hem that We Wedde
And wik I pray Ihesus shorte her liuys
That Wol not be gouernedy be her Wyuys
And olde and angry nygardis of dispence
Gody sende hem sone a foul sherry pestilence
¶ Here endith the tale of the Wyf of bathe.
¶ And begynneth the prologh of the freere.
THis nobyl limytour this Worthy frere
He made alWey a maner louryngh chere
Vpon the sompnour but for honeste
No Villeyns Wordy as yet spak he
But atte laste he sayde vnto the Wyf of bathe
Dame qdy he godi you euer kepe fro scathe
For here ye haue touchidy also moot y the
In scole mater a ful greet difficulte
Ye haue saidy muche thingh right coriously
But dame here as ye ridey be the Wey
Vs nedith not to spekie but of game
And lete auctours be a goddis name
To prechinge and to scole of clergye
And yf it likith vnto this gentil companye
I Wolde you of a sompnour telle a game
Parde ye molde Wel knowen be the name
That of a sompnour may no gode be saidy
I pray that noy of you be eyrl a payde
A sompnour is a renner vp and douy
With maundementis for fornicacion
And y bete at euery tolWnys ende

Our oste thay spake a fir ye sholde he knowe
And certis a may of your astat
In company We Wol haue no debat
Telleth your tale and let the sompnour be
Thay quod the sompnour let hym say by me
What so hym list When it comyth to my lot
By god I shal hym quyte euery grot
I shal hym telle Whiche a grete honour
It is to be a flaterynge lympytour
And of many another maner crime
Whiche nedith not to reherce at this tyme
And his office I shal hym telle ywis
Our oste answerde pes nomore of this
And after this he sayde vnto the freere
Tel forth your tale myn owhyn maister deere

Here endith the Freris prologe +

And here begynneth his tale +

Tilony ther Was dwellynge in my contre
A archedekyn a man of high degre
That boldly did sul many an execucion
In punysshynge of euery fornicacion
Of Whichecraft and eke of baudrye
Of diffamacion and auoutrye
Of chirche Wars and of testamentis
Of contract and of lak of sacramentis
Of Vsurye and eke of symonye also
But certis lechours did he muche Woo
They sholde synge yf that they Were hent
And smale tithers also Were soule shent

If ony person wolde vpon hym pleyne
There myghte asterte no peramal peyne
For smale tithis and smale offeryngis
He made the peple ful pitously to synge
For or the bisshop caughte hym with his hook
They were in the archedeknys book
And than hadde he thurgh his Jurisdiction
Power of hem to do ful correction
He hadde a sompnour redy to his hond
A slygher boy was non in engelond
For sotilly he hadde his espiall
That taughte hym where he myghte auayl
He knew of lechours one or two
To teche hym to fourre and twenty mo
For though ỳ sompnour were as wood as ony hare
To telle his harlotrye I wol not spare
For we be out of his correction
They haue of vs no Jurisdiction
Me neuer shal ferme of al her lyuys
Of tir so be wymen of the styuys
Quod the sompnour put out of my care
Pees with myscharnce or with mys auenture
Sayde our ost and let hym telle his tale
Now tel forth though the sompnour gale
Me sparith not myn owen maister dere
This fals theef the sompnour qd the frere
Hadde alwey redy baudis to his honde
As ony hawk is to the lure in engelonde
That tolde hym al the secre that they coude

For her acquyntaunce was nat alwey nouthe
They were alle his appowers priuely
He took hym self a gret prouffit therby
His maister knew not alwey what he way
Withouten maundementis of lewdy mey
He coude sompne on peyne of cristis curs
Andy they were glady forto fillen his purs
Andy make hym grete festis at the nale
Andy right as Judas hadde pursis smale
Andy was a theef right such a theef was he
His maister hadde but half his dute
He was yf I shal yeue hym the laude
A theef a Sompnour andy eke a laude
He hadde eke wenchis at his retenu
That whether sir Robert or sir hue
Or Jacke or Raaf or who so that it were
That lay by hem they tolde hym in his ere
Thus were the wenchis andy he of on assent
Andy he wolde set a fayneydy maundement
Andy sompne hem to the Chapetre bothe two
Andy pyle the may andy lete the wenche go
Thay wolde he say frendy I shal for thy sake
So stryke her out of our lettris blake
The dar nomore as in this caas trauayle
I am thy frendy there I may the auayle
Terteyn he knew of bribours meny mo
Than possible is to telle in yeris two
For in this worlde nys dogge for the bowe
That can an hurt dere from an hool knowe

Better than this sompnour knoweth a lechour
Or a loutrer or ellis ony Paramour
And for that was the fruyt of al his rent
Therfore on it he sette al his entent
And so befyl that onys vp on a day
This sompnour was euer waytyng his pray
Forto sompne ay olde wyf horrible
Feynynge a cause for he wolde her bridil
It happid that he sawe [illegible] hym ryde
Agay ye may vnder a [illegible] syde
A wolle he war and [illegible] bright and kene
He hadde vpon hym a tirtil of grene
Ay hat vp on his hed with strengis blake
Sire quod the sompnour hyl and wel y take
Welcome quod he and euery goody felaw
Whithir ridist thou vnder this grene wode schaw
Sayde this yomay wolt thou fare with me to day
This sompnour answerde and sayde nay
Here faste by quod he is myn entent
To ridyn forto reyse vp al the rent
That longith now to my lordis duete
Art thou than a baylle ye quod he
He ne durste for velonye and schame
Say that he was a sompnour for the name
Depardeux quod this sompnour dere brother
Thou art a baylle and I am another
I am vnknowen now in this contre
Of thyn acqueyntaunce therme I pray the
And eek of bretherhed yf that thou list

I haue goldy and ſiluyr in my chiſt
Yf that the happith to come in our ſhire
It ſhal be thyn right as thou wolt deſire
Gramercy quod this ſompnour be my feith
Euerich in other hondy he leyith
Forto be ſworn til that they deye
In daliaunce they ryde forth and pleye
This ſompnour whiche was ful of Jangelis
As ful of lenyn bey thyſe Wereiangelis
And euer enquiryng vpon euery thing
Brothir quod he where is now your dwellyng
Anothir day yf that I ſhal you ſeche
This yoman hym anſwerde with ſofte ſpeche
Brother quod he fer in the North cuntre
Where as I hope ſom tyme I ſhal the ſe
Er we departe y ſhal the ſo wel wis
That of my hous ne ſhalt thou neuer mys
Now brother quod this ſompnour I you pray
Teche me whyles ye ridith be the way
Syn that ye be a baylly and ſo am I
Som ſubtilte as telliith me feithfully
In myn office how I may moſt wynne
And ſparith not for conſcience of ſynne
But dere brothir tel me how do ye
Now be my trouthe dere brother ſaidy he
As I ſhal telle the a faithful tale
My wagis be ful ſtreit and ſmale
My lordy is hardy to me and daungerous
And myn office is ful laborous

And therfore by extorcions I lyue
For soth I take al that men wol me yeue
Algate be sleyghte or be violence
From yeer to yeer I wynne al my dispence
I can no bettir telle the feithfully
Now certis quod the sompnour so fare I
I spare not to take god it wot
But yf it be to heuy or to hoot
That I may gete in counsel priuely
No more conscience of that haue I
Were myn extorcioun I might not kuyn
Of suche iapis wol I not be shryuyn
Stomak ne conscience knowe I none
I shrewe the shrifte fadris everichone
Wel be we met be god and be saint Jame
But leue brothir tel me thy name
Quod this sompnour in this mene while
This yeman gan a litel for to smyle
Brothir quod he wolt thou that I the telle
I am a fend my dwellynge is in helle
And here I ryde aboute my purchasinge
To wite if men wol yeue me ony thinge
To purchace is the effect of al my rent
Loke wel thou ridest for al the same entent
To wynne good thou rekkist neuer how
Right so fare I for ryde wold I now
Unto the worldis ende for a pray
A quod the sompnour benedicite what ye say
I wende ye hadde ben a yoman trewly

We haue a mannys shap as wel as I
Haue ye than a figure determynat
In helle there ye be in your astat
Nay certeinly quod he there haue we noon
But what vs liketh we any take vs on
Or ellis make you more we be to shape
Sometyme like a man and sometyme like an ape
Or like an aungel can I ryde or go
It is no wonder thing though it be so
To lewed ygnorant can discerne the
And parde yet more craft can I than he
Why quod the sompnour ryde ye than or goon
In sundry shap and not alwey in oon
For we quod he wol vs in suche fourme make
As most auayl is our prayes forto take
What maketh you to haue al this labour
Wel many a cause leue sir sompnour
Sayde this fend but al thing hath tyme
The day is short and it is passed pryme
And yet ne gat I no thing in this day
I wol entende to wynnynge yf I may
And not entende our wittis to declare
For brother myne thy wittis ben al to bare
To vnderstonde though I tolde hem the
But for thou axist why laboure we
For sumtyme we be goddis instrumentis
And meues to do his comaundementis
When that hym list vpon his creaturis
In diuers acte and in diuers figuris

Wiethoute hym We haue no might certeyn
Yf that hym list to stonden there agayn
Andy som tyme at our pray haue We leue
Only the soule andy not the body to greue
Witnes of Job Whom We dide Woo
Andy som tyme haue We might on bothe two
This is to say on soule andy on body eek
Andy somtyme We be suffrady for to seke
Vp on a may andy do his soule vnreste
Andy not his body andy al for the beste
Whan he Withstandith our temptacion
It is a cause of his saluacion
Al be it that it Was not oure entent
He sholde be saaf by goddis Jugement
Andy somtyme We be seruaunt vnto may
As to the archebisshop saint Dunstan
Andy to the apostil seruaunt Was J
Yet tel me quod the sompnour feithfully
Make ye your bodyes in suche Wyse alWay
Of elementis the fendy answerde nay
Som tyme We fayny andy som tyme We aryse
With dede bodyes in sele sondry Wyse
Andy spelke as resonabil faire andy Wel
As the Pithonysse didy to Samuel
Andy yet Wol som men sayn it Was not he
J do no force of your diuinite
But o thing Warne J the J Wol not iape
Thou Wolt Wete algatis holde We be shape
Thou shalt here afterWardy my brother dere

Come where it nedith not of me to lern
For thou shalt by thyn olbey experience
Conne in the chayer rede this sentence
Better than Wingile While he was on lyue
Or dauid also nolde leet vs ryde belyue
For I wol holde company with the
Til it be so that thou forsake me
Nay quod the sompnour that shal not betide
I am a yeman that knowen any sul wyde
My trouthe wol I holde to the as in this cas
For though were the deuyl Sathanas
Take thou thy part of that men wol the yeue
And I shal myne thus may we bothe lyue
And yf that ony of vs haue more than other
Let hym be trewe and parte with his brother
I graunte quod the deuyl be my fey
And with that word they riden forth hir wey
And right at an entre of a tolnys ende
To whiche the sompnour shoop hym forto wende
They salwe a carte that charged was with hey
Whiche that a carter drof forth in the wey
Deep was the wey for whiche the Carte stoode
This carter smoot and cryde as he were woode
What hayt brok hayt scot spare ye for the nonys
The fend quod he you fecche body and bonys
As ferforth as euer ye were y folde
So mykil wo as I haue for you tholde
The deuyl haue bothe hors Carte and hey
Quod the sompnour here shal we haue a pley

And neer the fiend he drew as naught ne were
Ful priuely and wonder in his ere
Herkyn my brother herkyn be thy feith
Heriſt thou not how the carter ſeith
Take hit anon for he hath yeue it the
Both hey and carte and eek his capullis thre
Nay quod the deuyl god woot neuer a deel
It is not his entent trust me weel
Aske hym ſelf yf that thou trowweſt not me
Or ellis ſtynte awhyle and thou ſhalt ſe
This carter thwackith his hors on the croupe
And they begonne to drawe and to stoupe
Hait nowe quod he that Jheſu criſt you blees
And al his handy work both more and les
That was wel y twight myn owen liard boy
I pray to god ſaue the and ſaint loy
Now is my carte out of the ſlowgh parde
Lo brother quod the fend what tolde I the
Here may ye ſe myn owen dere brother
The churle ſpak o thing but he thought another
Let vs go forth aboute our viage
Here wynne I no thing vpon this cariage
Whan that they comyn ſomwhat out of the town
This compnour to his brothir gan to roun
Brother quod he here wonyth an old rebecke
That hadde almoſt as leef to leſe her neckke
As forto yeue a penny of her good
I wol haue xij d. though that ſhe be wood
Or I wol ſomone hir vnto our office

And yet godd woot of hir I knolde no vice
But for thou canst not as in this contre
Wynne thy cost take here ensaumple of me
This sompnour clappith at the widowis gate
Com out he sayde thou olde verey trate
I trowe thou hast som preest or frere with the
Who knockith saidy this wyf benedicite
God saue you sir what is your swete wyl
I haue quod the sompnour of the a bil
Up on peyne of cursinge loke that you be
To morowe before the archedeknys kne
To answere to the court of certeyn thinge
Now lordy quod she Jhesu crist heuene kynge
So wisly helpe me as y ne may
I haue be sik andy that ful many a day
I may not go so fer quod she ne ryde
But I be dedy so prickith it in my syde
May I nat aye a libel sire sompnour
And answere there be my procutour
To suche thinge as men wol appose me
Yes quod the sompnour pay anon let se
Twelf pens to me andy I wol the quyte
I shal no prouffit haue therby but lyte
My maister hath the prouffit andy not I
Com of andy let me ryde hastely
Yeue me .xij. pens for I may no lenger tary
Xij. pens quod she a lady sainte mary
So wisly helpe me out of care andy synne
This wyde worlde though I shulde it winne

Ne haue I not ẏnẏdy. With in my holde
Ye knowe wel that I am powre and olde
Kithe youre almes on me powre wrecche
Nay than quod he the foule fendy me feeche
If I the eause though thou sholdist be spilt
Allas qdy she good woot I am not in the gilt
Pay me quod he or be sshete saint anne
I wol anone bere awey thyn nethe panne
For dette whiche thou owest me of olde
Whey that thou madist thyn husbondy cokeolde
I payde at hoom for thy correction
Thou lixt quod she be my saluacion
Ne was I neuer or now widow or wyf
Somnedy vnto youre court in al my lyf
Ne neuer y was but of my body trewe
Vnto the deuyl blak andy wolugh of hewe
Yaue I thy body andy eke my panne to
Andy whey the deuyl herde hir curse so
Vp on her knees he sayde in this manere
Now mabyle myn oldey moder dere
Is this youre wyl in erneste as ye saye
The deuyl quod she fette hym or he dey
Andy panne andy al but he wol hym repent
Nay olde stot that is not myn entent
Quod the sompnour for to repent me
For ony thing that I haue hady of the
I wolde I hadde thy smok andy euery cloth
Now brother quod the deuyl be not wroth
Thy body andy this panne is myn be right

Thou shalt with me to helle yet to nyghte
Where thou shalt knowe of our myschefe
More than a maister of diuinite
And with that worde the fende spedy hym fast
Body and soule he with the deuyl brent
Where that thyse sompnours haue her heritage
And god that made after his ymage
Mankynde saue and gyde vs alle and sory
And leue that sompnours good ney be tory
Lordinge I coude telle you quod the frere
Hadde I had leue for this sompnour here
After the text of crist poule and John
And of our other doctours many on
Suche peynes as your hertis myghte agryse
Al be it so nothinge may I deuyse
Though that I myghte a thousand wynter telle
The peynes of that cursed peyne of helle
But forto kepe vs fro that cursed place
Waketh and praieth Jhesu of his grace
So kepe vs fro the temptour Sathanas
Herkenyth this worde beware in this caas
The lioun sittith in his awayte alway
To sle the Innocent yf that he may
Dispose ye your hertis ay to withstonde
The fende that wol make you thral and bonde
He may not tempte you ouyr your myght
For crist wol be your champioun and knyght
Therfore praye that the sompnour hym repente
Of his mysdedis or that the deuyl hym hente

Here endith the Frers tale.
And begynnyth the Sompnours prologe.

THis Sompnour in his stirop high stoode
Up on this frere his herte was so woode
That lik an aspin leef he quook for yre
Lordinges quod he o thing I desire
I you beseche of your curteisye
Sithe ye haue herd this false frere lye
As suffrith me I may a tale telle
This frere bostith that he knoweth helle
And god woot that is litil wonder
Frere and fendis ben but litil a sunder
For parde ye haue often tyme herd telle
How that a frere ravyshed was to helle
In spirit onys be auysioun
And as an aungil ledde hym up and doun
To shewe hym the peynes that were there
In al the place saw he not a frere
Of othir folk he saw ynowe in wo
Unto this aungil spak this frere tho
Now sire quod he haue freres such a grace
That non of hem shal come in this place
Yes quod the aungel many a myllioun
And unto Sathanas he ladde hym a doun
And now hath Sathanas such a tayl
Braader than of a Carik is the sayl
Hold up thy tayl thou Sathanas quod he
Shew forth thyn ars and let the frere se
Where is the nest of Freres in this place

And ere that a furlong Wey of space
Right so as bees swarme out of an hyue
Out of the deuelis ars they gon dryue
Twenty thousandy freris on a route
And throwh out helle swarmedy al aboute
And any ayeen as faste as they may goon
And in to his ars they crepte in euerichon
He clippidy ayeen his tayl andy lay stylle
This freve When he lokidy hadi his Wille
Vp on the tormentis of this sory place
His spirit gody restoridy of his grace
Vnto his body ayeen andy he awook
But nathéles for feer yet he quok
So Was the deuyl ay in his mynde
That is it his heritage of verry kynde
Godi saue you alle saue this cursidy freve
My prology Wil I ende in this manere

Here endith the prology. And begynneth the Sompnours tale.

Lordingis qdy he in yorkshire as I gesse
Is a mersh contre that callidy is holdernes
In Whiche ther Wente a lymytour aboute
To preche andy eke to begge it is no doute
And so be fyl that on a day this freve
Hadde prechidy in a chirche in his manere
And specially aboueh euery thing
Excitidy he the pepil in his prechinge
To trentalis andy to yeue for goddis sake
Where With men mighte holy housis make

Ther as deuyne ſeruyſe is honourid
Nat there it is Waſtid and deuourid
Ne there it nedith not to be yauyn
As to poſſeſſioners that mowe lyuyn
Thankid be god in Wele and habundaunce
Trentals ſaid he deliuereth from penaunce
Here frendis ſoulis as Wel olde as yong
Ye Whan they be ſo haſtely y ſong
Not forto holde a preſt Joly and gay
He ſyngeth but o maſſe on a day
Deliuereth out anon quod he the ſoulis
Ful hard it is With flefhook and oulis
To frey J clawed/or to brenne or bake
Nowh ſpede you haſtely for criſtis ſake
And Whey this frere had ſaid his entent
With qui cum patre/forth his Wey he Went
Whan folk in the chirche had yeue What hem leſt
He Wente his Wey no lenger Wolde he reſt
With ſkrippe and tippid ſtaf y tukkid hye
In euery mannys hous he gan to poure and prye
And beggid mele or cheſe or ellis corn
His felaw hadde a ſtaf J tippid With horn
A pyre of tablis of clene yuory
And a poyntel y polyſſhed fetously
And Wroot the namys al Wey as he ſtood
Of alle the folk that yaf hym ony good
Aſkaunce that he Wolde for hem praye
Yeue bs a buſſhel Whete mele or reye
A goddis lichil or a crip of cheſe

Or elles what you lyst I may not chese
A goddis half peny or a masse peny
Or yeue vs of your brawn yf ye haue eny
A dagget of your blanket leue dame
Our sustir dere lo here I wryte your name
Bacon or chese or suche thingis as ye fynde
A sturdy harlot wente hym ay behynde
That was hir oste and euer he bare a sak
And what men yaf hym leyde it on his bak
And whan he was oute atte dore anoon
He planed a wey the namys euerichon
That he before hadde wryte in his tablis
He seruyd hem with nyflis and with fablis
May there thou liest Sompnour quod the frere
Pees quod our ost for cristis moder dere
Tel forth thy tale and spare it nat at al
So thryue I quod the sompnour so I shal
So longe he wente from hous to hous til he
Cam to an hous there he was wont to be
Refresshid more than in an hundrid placis
Sek lay the goody man whos the place is
Bedrede vp on a bench lodde he lay
Deus hic quod he O Thomas goody day
Sayde this frere curteisly and fre
Thomas god yelde you ful ofte tyme quod he
I haue on this bench I fare ful weel
Here haue I eten many a mery meel
And fro the benche he droof a wey the cat
And leyde a down his potent and his hat

And eke his ſkrippe and ſette hym ſofte a doun
Hys felaw was walkid in to the toun
Forth with his knaue in to that oſtrye
Where as he ſhoop hym that night to ly
O dere maiſter sayde this silli man
Hold haue ye faryn fyn marche began
I ſalle you nat this fourtenyght ne more
Dan woot quod he labourid haue I ful ſore
And ſpecially for thy ſaluacion
Haue y said many a precious orison
And for our othir frendis god hem bleſſe
I haue this day be at your chirche at meſſe
And said a ſermon to my leuedy wit
Nat after the playn text of holy wryt
For it is hard to you as I ſuppoſe
And therfore telle I you al the gloſe
Gloſinge is a ful glorious thing certeyn
For lettir ſleth as we clerkis seyn
There haue I taught hem to be charitable
And ſpende her goodis there it is reſonable
And eke I ſalle our dame where is ſhe
Yonder in the yerde I trowe that ſhe be
Said this man and ſhe wol come anon
Ey maiſter wel com be ye by ſainte John
Sayde this wyf holde fare ye hertely
This frere ariſeth up ful corioully
And hire embraſeth in his armys narowe
And kiſſeth here ſwete & chirketh as a ſparowe
With his lippis/dame quod he right wel

As he that is your seruaunt euerideel
Thankid be god that yaf you soule & lyf
Yet saw I nat to day so faire a wyf
In al the chirche so god saue me
Ne god amende the fantis sir quod she
Algatis welcome ye be by my fey
Gramercy dame that haue I founde alwey
But of your grete goodnesse be your leue
I wolde praye you that ye you not greue
I wol with Thomas speke a litil word
Thyse Curatouris ley not worth a cord
To gropen tenderly a mannys conscience
In shrifte and in preching is my diligence
And study on petris wordis and poulis
I walke aboute and clense mennys sowlis
To yelde Jhesu crist his proper rent
To sprede his wordis is al myn entent
Now be your leue dere sire quod she
Chidith hym wel for saint charite
He is ay angry as is a pissemyre
Though that he haue al that he can desire
Though I hym wrye and make hym warm
And ouer hym ley my leg and myn arm
He gronyeth lik our boor lith in our sty
Other disport of hym right noon haue I
I may not plese hym in no maner aras
O Thomas Je vous dy Thomas Thomas
This makith the fend this most be amendid
Ire is a thing that holy god offendith

And ther of wol I speke a word or two
Now maister quod the wyf or that ye go
What wyl ye dyne I wol go ther aboute
Now dame quod he Je lous dy sanns doute
Haue I of a capon but the lyuer
And of your whyte breed but a shyuer
And after that a rosted piggis hed
But y ne wolde for me that no beest were ded
Thay hadde I with you hoolly sufficiaunce
I am a man of litil sustenaunce
My spirit hath his foysterynge in the bibyl
My body is ay so redy and so penyble
To make that my body is ful destroied
I pray you dame that ye be not annoied
Though I you my counsel so frendly shewe
Be god I nolde haue told it but a fewe
And sire quod she but o word or I goo
My child is ded with ynne this wokis two
Sone after that ye wente out of this toun
His deth saugh I be reuelacioun
Sayde this freere at hoom in our dortoure
I dar wel say that with ynne half anhoure
After his deth I saugh hym bore to blis
In myn visioun so god my soule wis
So dede our Sexteyn and our fermerer
That haue be trewe freris this .xl. yeer
Ther may now god be thanked of his loue
Make ye her Jubilee and walkyn al aboue
And up I wos and al our couent eek

With many a teer trillyng on my cheek
Without ony noyse and clateryng of bellis
Te deum was our song and no thing ellis
Some aftir to crist I had ay holy orisons
Thankynge hym of my goodly reuelacions
For syre and dame trustith me right wel
Our orisons ben more effectuel
And more we se of cristis secret thingis
Than lorel pepil al be they kyngis
We lyue in penitaunce and in abstinence
And lorel folk in riches and dispence
Of mete and drynke and in foul delyte
We haue the world dis list al in despit
Lazar and dines liueden ful diuersly
And diuers guerdons had they ther by
Who so wol praye muste faste and be clene
And fatte his soule and make his body lene
We fare as saith the Apostil cloth and food
Suffisith vs though they be not ful good
The clennesse and the fastynge of vs freris
Maketh that crist exceptith our praieris
Lo moyses .xl. daies and .xl. nyght
Fastid or that god ful of his myght
Spak with hym in the mount Synay
With empty wombe of fastynge many a day
Here receyued he the lawe that was writyn
With goddis fynger and Ely wel ye wetyn
In the mounte Oreb or he hadde ony speche
With high god that is our lyuys leche

He faſtid longe and was in contemplance
Aaron that hadde the tempil in gouernaunce
And eke the othir preſtis euerichon
Into the tempil whan they ſholde goon
To prayen for the peppl and do ſeruiſe
They nolde drynke in no maner wyſe
No drynke that myghte hem dronke make
But there in abſtinence to praye and wake
Leſt that they deyden take hede what I ſay
But they be ſober that for the peppl pray
Ware that I ſay for it ynow ſuffiſith
Our lord Jeſu as holi writ deuiſith
Yaf vs enſampyl of faſtinge and praieris
Therfore we mendicantis we poure freris
Been wedded to pouerte and to continence
To charite humbilnes and pacience
To perſecucion for euery righteouſnes
To wepinge miſericord and to clemnes
And therfore mowe ye ſe that our praieres
I ſpeke of vs we mendicaunt freris
Be to the high god more eſpeptable
Than youris with your feſtis at your tabyl
Fro Paradis firſt yf I ſhal not lye
Was man out chaſid for his glotenye
And caſt was out to labour certeyn
But herkeyn now Thomas what I ſhal ſayn
I haue no text of it as I ſuppoſe
But I fynde a maner thinge of a gloſe
That ſpecially our ſwete lord Jheſus

Spak this by freris Whan he sayde thus
Blissid ben they that poure in spiryt been
And so forth al the gospel mowe ye seen
Whether it be liker to our professioun
Or heris that swymmen in possessioun
Fye on her woompe and her glotenye
And of her lewdonesse I hem deffye
Me thynketh they be lik to Jonmayn
Fat as a whale and walke lik a swayn
Al vinolent as a botel in the spence
Her prayer is of ful litil reuerence
Whan they for soulis say the psalme of Dauid
Lo buf they sey Cor meum eructauit
Who folowith cristis gospel and his lore
But we that humble be chast and pore
Workars of goddis wordis & nat auditours
Therfore right as an hauk vpon his fours
Vp springith in to the eyr so prayeris
Of charitable and chast freris
Maketh hem sownne to goddis eris tho
Thomas Thomas so moot I ryde or go
And by that lord that clepid was saint Jue
Me thu our brother were holdist ȳ nener thryue
In our chapitre praye we bothe day and nyght
To crist to sende the bothe helthe and myght
Thy body forto welden ful hastely
God woot quod he no thing ther of fele I
As helpe me god as m selfe yeris
Haue I spendid on many diuers freris

Ful many a pounde yet fare I neuer the bet
Tertey my goode haue I almoste beset
Farwel my golde for it is al a go
The frere answerde o Thomas dost thou so
What nedith the dyuers freris forto seche
What nedith hym that hath a parfyt leche
To sechen othir lechis in ony toun
Your in constaunce is your confusioun
Holde ye thay me and elle al our couent
To preye for you be not sufficient
Thomas that iape is not worth a myte
Your maladye is for we haue to lyte
And yeue that couent four and twenty grotis
And yeue that couent half a quartir otis
And yeue that frere a peny and let hym go
Nay, nay Thomas it may no thinge be so
What is a ferthinge worth partide on twelue
Lo eche thinge that is onyde in hym selue
Is more strong thay whay it is skateride
Thomas of me thou shalt not be flateride
Thou wolde haue our labour al for nought
The high gode that al this worlde hath wrought
Saith that the workman is worthy his hire
Thomas of your tresour nought wol I desire
As for my self but that our Couent
To praye for you be ay so diligent
And forto holde vp cristis olbey chirche
Thomas yf ye wol lerne forto wirche
Of bildynge vpon chirchis mold ye fynde

Yf it be goody in Thomas lyf of yrde
Ye lyen here ful of angir andy of yre
With whiche the deuyl set your herte oy fire
Andy chidey here the holy Innocent
Your wyf that is here so meke andy so pacient
Andy therfore Thomas troll me yf thou list
Me stryue not with thy wyf as for the best
Andy here thyse wordy a wey nolle be thy faith
Touchimgy such thimgy. lo what the wyse saith
With ymme thy hous ne be thou no stormy
To thy subiectis do thou nooy oppressiony
Me make thyy acqueyntaumce not to fle
Andy Thomas yet eft sones warne I the
Be war of her that in thy bosomy slepith
Ware fro the serpent that so slily crepith
Vndir the gras andy styngeth ful subtilly
Be war of her andy herkyn paciently
That elleuen thousandy mey haue lost her lyuys
For striuymgy with her lemmans & her wyuys
Nolle syy ye haue so holy a meke wyf
What nedith you Thomas to make stryf
Ther nys ilyys no serpent so cruell
Whan a may tredith vpoy his tayl ne half so fel
As a woman is whan she hath caught yre
Verry vengeaumce is than al her desire
Ire is a symme of the grete seuyn
Andy ful abhominabil to the kymgy of heuyn
Andy to hym self it is a destruction
This euery lewdy vicar or parsoy

Cay ſey holde Jre engendreth homicide
Jre in ſoth is the executour of pryde
Jwote of Jre ſay right muche ſorowe
That my tale ſholde laſte til to morowe
Andy therfore pray J godi bothe day andy nyght
That to ay yrous may godi ſende litil myght
Jt is gret harm andy certis gret pyte
To ſette ay yrous may in high degre
Tyhylom ther Was ay yrous potestate
Whiche hasty Was in Jugement algate
Upon a day out ridey knyghtis tWo
Andy as fortune Wolde that it Was ſo
That oy of hem cam hom that other didy nought
Anoy the knyght before the Juge is brought
That sayde thus thou hast thy felowe ſlayn
For Whiche J deme the to the deth certayn
Andy to anothir knyght comaundy he
Go lede hym to the deth J charge the
Andy happidy as they Wenty he the Way
Towardy the place Where he ſholde dey
The knight cam Whiche that men Went hady he dey
They thoughte they it Were the beſt reedy
To lede hem bothe to the Juge agayn
They saydey lordy the knyght hath not ſleyn
His felaw here he ſtont hool a lyue
Ye ſhal be dey quod he ſo mot J thryue
This is to say bothe oy tWo andy thre
Andy to the firſte knyght right thus ſpak he
J dampnedy the thou moſt algatis be dey

And thou also most nedis lese thyn hed
For thou art cause why thy felaw deyeth
And to the thirde knyght right thus he seyeth
Thou hast not do that I comaundid the
And thus he didy hem sle al thre
Thus Cambustus was eek dronkeleu
And ay delitidy hym to be a shrew
And so befil a lordy of his meyne
That louydy wel vertuous moralite
Saide on a day betwix hem self right thus
A lorde is lost yf he be aught vicious
And dronkenesse is eke a foul vesyde
Of ony man and namely of a lorde
Ther is many ay ye and many ay ese
Waytynge on a lorde he not nat where
For goddis loue drynketh more temperatly
Wyne maketh a man to lyue wreachidly
His mynde and eek his lymys euerichon
The reuerse shalt thou se qdy he anon
And preue it be thyn owen experience
That wyn ne doth to folk such offence
Ther is no wyn that bereuyth me my might
Of hondy of foot ne of myn yen sight
And for despit he drank muche the more
Ay hundridy part than he didy before
And right anon this vrous cursidy wreche
This knyghtis sone leet beforn hym feche
Comaundidy hym he sholde beforn hym stonde
And sodenly he took his bolwe in honde

And by the strength he pulleth to his here
And with an awe he slough the childy there
Now wethir haue I a siker hondy or none
Quod he is al my might and mynde a goon
Hath thy reneuedy me myn yen sight
What sholde I telle the answer of the knyght
His sone was sleyn ther is no more to say
Geth ware therfore with lordis for to play
Syngeth placebo and I shal yf I can
But yf it be vnto a poure man
To a poure man men sholde his vices telle
But not to a lordy though he sholde go to helle
LO Jnus turnus that strongy peraien
Hath destroyde he the ryuer of gysen
For that any hors of his was dreynt ther ynne
Whan that he wente Babiloy for to wynne
He made that the ryuer was so smal
That men might ride and wade ouer al
So what sayde he that so wel teche can
Me be no felow to any pouus man
Me with no woody may walke by the way
Lest thou repente I wol no forther say
Now Thomas leue brother leef thyn Jre
Thou shalt me fynde as iust as a squiere
Holdy nat the deuylis knyf ay in thy herte
Thy anger doth me also sore smerte
But shew to me al thy confessiõ
May quod the sik may be saint Symon
I haue be shriue this day of my curat

I haue hym tolde al myn hert
It nedith nomore to speke of it sayde he
But yf it list of myn humylite
Yeue me thay of thy goody to make our cloister
Sayde he for many a muskle & mery ay oyster
Whery othir men haue been ful wel at ese
Haue been our foody our cloister forto reyse
Andy yet godi woot hymselfe our fundement
Parfourmedy is ne of our chirche ful pament
Ther is not a tile with ynne our wonys
Be godi we owe fifty poundy for stonys
Now help Thomas for hym that harowedy helle
Or ellis moste we our bokis selle
Andy yf men lacke our predicacion
Thay goth the worlde al to destruccion
For who so wol fro this worlde vs reveue
So godi me saue Thomas be your leue
He wolde reveue out of this worlde the sonne
For who cay teche andy worke as we konne
Andy that is nat of litil tyme quod he
But seth Ely was or Elyse
Haue freris be that fynde I of recordz
In charite y thankedy be our lordz
Now Thomas help for saint charite
Andy doun anon he sittith on his kne
This sik man wept nygh woody for yre
He wolde that the frere hadde be a fyre
With his fals dissimulacion
Suche thingis as ley in my possession

Quod he that may I yeue you and noȝ othir
Ye ſey me thus holde that I am your brothir
Ye certis qȝ the frere truſtith me right wel
I took our dame our lettir and ȝour ſeel
Holde wel quod he and ſomwhat ſhal I yeue
Vnto your holy Couent whyle y lyue
And in thy hondȝ thou ſhalt it haue anoȝ
On this condicion and othir noȝ
That thou departe it ſo my dere brother
That euery frere haue as moche as othir
This ſhalt thou ſwere on thy profeſſioun
Withoute fraude or cauillacioun
I ſwere it quod the frere vp on my feith
And therwith al his hondȝ in his he leith
Lo here my feith in me ſhal be no lak
Than put thy hondȝ adoun right be my bak
Seyde this man and grope wel be hynde
Be nethe my buttok there ſhalt thou fynde
A thyngȝ that I haue hidȝ in priuyte
A thoughte this frere that ſhal go with me
And doun his hondȝ he launchith to the cliſte
In hope forto fynde there ſom goodȝ yefte
And whan this ſik man felte this frere
Aboute his towel gropinge here and there
Amydȝ his hondȝ he let the frere a fart
Ther is no Capul drawynge in a Cart
That mighte haue let a fart of ſuche a ſoun
The frere vp ſtert as doth a wodȝ lioun
A fals thorle quod he for Cockis bonys

This hast thou in despit do for the nonys
Thou shalt a bye this fart yf that y may
His meyne with that herdyn suche array
Com leppynge in and chasid out the freve
And forth he goth with a ful heuy chere
And sette his felow there as lay his stoor
He lokid as he were a wilde boor
And grintith with the teth so was he wroth
A sturdy paas doun to the court he goth
Where as ther wonid a man of gret honour
To whom that he was alwey confessour
This worthy man was lordy of that village
This freve cam as he were in a rage
Where as this lordy sat etyng at his borde
Unnethe might the freve spekc o worde
Til atte laste he sayde godyn you se
This lordy gan loke and sayde benedicite
What freve John what maner world is this
I se wel som thing ther is amys
Ye loke as though the wode were ful of theuys
Sit doun and tel me what your greue is
And it shal be amendid yf I may
I haue quod he had a despit to day
God yelde it you a doun in your village
That in this world ther nys so poure a page
That he nolde haue abhominacion
Of that I haue receyued in the toun
And yet it greuyth not me half so sore
As that the olde chorl with lockis hore

Glassemyd hath our holy Couent ellle
Nolb maister quod the lordy I you beselle
Mo maister sir quod he but seruitour
Though y haue had in scole that honour
Ody likith not that raby mey bs calle
Nothir in market ne in our large halle
Me fors quod he but tel me al your greef
Sir quod this frere m odious myschief
This day be tydy is myn ordre andy me
Andy so y consequens in eche degre
Of holy chirche ody amende it sone
Sir quod the lordy ye Woot What is to done
Distempere you not ye be my confessour
Ye be the salt of the erthe andy the sauour
For goddis loue your pacience nolb holdy
Tel me your greef andy be anon hym toldy
As ye haue herdy beforne ye Woot Wel What
The lady of the hous ay stylle sat
Til she hadde herdy What the frere sayde
Ey goddis moder quod she the blissidy mayde
Is ther aught ellis tel me feithfully
Madame quod he holb thinke ye ther by
Holb that me thinkith quod she so ody me spede
I say a chorl hath do a chorlis dede
What sholde y say ody let hym neuer the
His fili hedy is ful of vanite
I holde hym in a maner of a fransy
Madame quod he be ody I shal not lye
But I m ony wyse may ony hym a wrelte

I shal diffame hym ouer al where I spelle
That sais blasfemur that chargith me
To parte that wol not departith be
To euery ylike moche with myschaunce
The lordy sat stille as he were in a traunce
And in his herte he wolkith vp and down
Hold that this chorle hady delectacion
To shelde suche a probleme to the freere
Neuer erst to nold herde I of suche a matere
I trowd the deuyl put it in his mynde
In ars metrik shal ther noman fynde
Before this day of suche a questioun
Who sholde make a demonstracion
That euery may sholde haue lik his part
As of a soun or of a souour of a fart
O nyce prowdy chorle I shrewd his face
Lo sirs quod the lordy with hardy grace
To euery y like tel me hold
That a fart sholde be departidy nold
Hit is an impossible it may not be
Ey nyce chorle godi lete hym neuer the
The vomblingy of a fart and euery soun
Ays but of ayer reuerberacioun
And there it wastith litil and litil alwey
Ther is noman can deme be my fey
Yf that it were departidy equally
What lo this chorle lo hold shrewdly
Vnto my confessour to day he spak
I holde hym certayn a demonyak

Now ete your mete and let the chorl go ply
Lete hym go hange hym self a deuyl wey
Now stondy the lordis squier at his bordy
That serf his mete and herde wordy be wordy
Of al this thingy of whiche I haue you saidy
My lordy quod he be not anyl a paydy
For I coude telle for a golbne cloth
To you sire frere so that ye be not wroth
Now that this fart sholde anyy delidy be
Among your couent yf it like sirhee
Tel quod the lordy and thou shalt haue anoy
A golbne cloth be godi and be seynt Johy
My lordy quod he when that the bedir is fair
Right here before you sittyngy in a chair
Let bringe a carte whele right in to this halle
But so that it haue his spokis alle
Fy. spokis hath a carte whele comynly
And beingy me. xij. freris woot ye why
For. xiij. is a couent as I gesse
Your confessour here for his worshipnesse
Shal parfourne vp the nombir of his couent
Thay shul they knele doury by one assent
And to euery spokis ende in this manere
Ful sadly ley his nose shal a frere
Your nobyl confessour ther y- hym saue
Shal holde his nose vpright vnder the naue
Thay shal this chorle with leky stryf e toughe
As ony tabour hider be y brought
And set hym oy the wheel right of this arst

Up on the naue and make hym lete a fart
And ye shul se by preif of my lif
The preif whiche that is demonstratif
That equally the sounde of it wol wende
And eke the stynk out at the spokis ende
Saue that this worthy may your confessour
Be cause he is a man of gret honour
Shal haue the firste fruyt as reson is
The nobil vsage of freris yet it is
The worthieste man of theym shal firste be serued
And certeinly he hath it well deserued
He hath to day taughe vs so muche goode
With preching in the pulpet there he stoode
That I may vouchesauf I say for me
He hadde the firste smel of fartis thre
And so wolde al his couent hardely
He leith hym so faire and so holily
The lorde the lady and eche man saue the freve
Sayde that Jankyn spak in this matere
As wel as Ouyde or Ptholome
Tolbching the chorlis they sayde subtilite
And by wyt made hym speke as he spak
He nys no fool ne demomak
And Jankyn hath y wonne a nelbe golbne
My tale is doon we be al[illegible] Toune

Here begynneth the prologe
of the clerk of Oxenford.

Our clerk of Oxenford our ost sayde
Ye ryde as quoyt & stille as doth a mayde

Were nell sponsidy sittynge at the bordy
This day herde I of your tunge no word
I trowe ye stody aboute some sophyme
But Salamon sayde euery thinge hath tyme
For goddis sake be of goody chere
It is no tyme nowe to stody here
Tel vs some mery tale be your fey
For what may is entridy in to a pley
Be nedis moot in to the pley assente
But prechith not as freris do in lente
To make vs for our oldy synnys wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe
Tel vs some mery thinge of auenturis
Your termys your colours and your figuris
Kepe hem in store til so be that ye endite
Hight style is when men to kynges write
Speliith so playn at this tyme I you pray
That we may vnderstonde what ye say
This worthy clerk benignely answerde
Ost quod he I am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of vs as nowe the gouernaunce
And therfore I shal do your obeysaunce
As fer as reson asketh hardely
I wol you telle a tale whiche that I
Lernyd at Padowe of a worthy clerk
As preuyd is be his wordis and his werk
He is nowe dedy and leyd in cheste
I pray to god yeue hys soule goode reste
Fraunceys petrark the laureat poete

Hyghte this clerk Whoos retorik ſwete
Enlumyned al Itayle of poetrie
As Lucanne dith of philoſophie
Or lalde or other art particuler
But deth that Wol not ſuffre vs to duelle here
But as it were the twynkelynge of an ye
Hem lotte hath ſtayn and alle ſhal We dye
But forth to telle of this Worthy man
That taughte me this tale as I began
He firſt With high ſtile enditith
Er he the dite of his tale Writith
A probleme in Whiche diſcriueth he
Pemounte and of Saluces the contre
And ſpekyn of arpentyn the hilles hye
That been the boundes of Weſt lumbardye
And of mount Veſulus in ſpecial
Where that the poo out of the Welle ſmal
Taklynge his firſt ſprynglynge and his cours
That Eſtward euer encreſith in his fours
To Emeli Vardy to Ferrare and Venise
The Whiche a long thing were to deuyſe
And treWly as to my Jugement
Me thinkith it a thing impertinent
Saue that he Wol conueye his matere
But thus he begynneth his tale as ye moW here

Here endith the prologe. And
begynneth the clerkis tale of Oxenforde

Ther Was in the Weſt ſide of Itayle
Doun at the Foote of Veſulus the colde

A lusty playn habundaunt of vitayl
Where mony a toun and tour thou maist beholde
That founded were in tyme of fadris eldy
And mony another delectabyl sight
And saluers this noble contre hight
A Markys sometyme lordy was of that londy
As were his worthy eldris hym before
And obeysaunt ay redy to his hondy
Were alle his lieges both lasse and more
Thus in delyt he lyuyd and hath do yore
Beloued a dradi thorugh fauouris of fortune
Both of his lordis and eke of his comune
Therwith he was to speke of lynage
The gentileste lawn of lumbardye
A fair persone a strongy and yongy of age
And ful of honoure and of curtesye
Discret ynow his contre forto gye
Saue in sony thingis he was to blame
And Waltir was this yonge lordis name
I blame hym thus that he considerid not
In tyme comynge what might hym betyde
But oy his lust present was al his thought
As forto haulke and hunte oy euery syde
Wel nygh alle other curis lete he slyde
And eke he nolde and that was worst of al
Wedde no wyf for aught that might be fal
Only that point his pepyl knar so sore
That flokmele oy a day they to hym went
And one of hem that wisest was of lore

Or ellis that the lordy wolde best assent
That he sholde telle hym what his peple ment
Or ellis coude he shelde wel such matere
He to the Marchis sayde as ye shul here
O nobil Marchis your humanite
Assureth vs and yeueth vs hardines
As ofte as tyme is of necessite
That we to you molde telle our heuynes
Acceptith nolde lordy of your gentilnes
That we with pitous herte come to compleyne
And lete your eris not my vois disdeigne
Al haue I not to doon in this matere
More than another may hath in this place
Yet for as muche as ye my lordy so dere
Haue alwey shewdy me fauour and grace
I dar the better aske of you a space
Of audience to shewe our request
And ye my lordy to do as you lest
For certis lordy so wel vs liketh yolde
And al your werk that ye haue doon and we
Me coude not our self deuisyn holde
We mighte lyuyn in more felicite
Saue o thinay lordy yf your wille be
That forto be a weddidy may yf that ye lest
They were your pepyl in souereyn hertis rest
Holde ye your hedy vnder the blisful yolk
Of souereynte and not of seruise
Whiche that men clepith spousayle or wedlok
And thynkith lordy among your wittis wyse

Holde that our daies passen in sondry wyse
For though we slepe or wake reme or ryde
Ay fleyth the tyme it wol nomay abyde
Andy though your grene yongthe flowre as yet
In crepith age as stylle as ony stoon
Andy deth manasseth euer age andy smyte
In eche astate for ther escapith noon
Andy also certayn as we knowe echon
That we shul dye andy vncertayn we alle
Eeny of the day when deth shal on vs falle
Acceptith thay of vs the trewe entent
That yet neuer refusedeyn your heste
Andy we wol lordy yf ye wol assent
Chese you a wyf in short tyme atte leste
Eony of the gentilleste andy of the meste
Of al this londe so that it oughte seme
Honour to godi andy you as I can deme
Deliuer vs out of al this lesy dede
Andy take a wyf for high goddis sake
For yf so be it befalle as godi forbede
That throwh your deth your lyf sholde slake
Andy that a straunge successour sholde it take
Your heritage o wo were vs on lyue
Wherfore we pray you hastely to wyue
Here meke prayer andy here meke chere
Made the Markis herte forto rawe pyte
Ye wol quod he myn olden pepyl dere
To that I neuer erst thoughte constreyne me
I me reioysid in my liberte

That selde tyme is founde in mariage
There I was free I muste be in seruage
But nathèles I se your trewe entent
And truste vpon your wit and haue doon ay
Wherfore of my free will I will assent
To wedde me as sone as euer y may
But ther as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wyf I you release
That chois and pray you of your profit see
For god it woot that childryn ofte been
Vnlik her worthy eldris hem before
Beaute cometh al of god not of the stren
Of whiche they be gendrid and y bore
I truste in god and euer haue do by fore
My mariage and myn astate and reste
I hym betake he may do as hym leste
Lete me allone in chesing of my wyf
That charge vpon my lak y wol endure
But I you pray and charge vpon your lif
What wyf that y take that ye me ensure
To worshipe her whylis her lif may dure
In word and werk bothe here & euerì where
As she an Emperours doughter were
And ferthermore this shal ye swere that ye
Ayenst my chois shal ye neuer stryue
For sith I shal forgo my liberte
At your requeste as euer mot I thriue
There as my herte is set there wol y wyue
And but ye wol assente in such maner

I pray you spekith nomore of this matere
With herte wyl they swory and assentyn
To al this thing ther sayde no wight nay
Besekyng hym of grace or that they wentyn
That he wolde graunte hem a certayn day
Of his spousayll as sone as ever he may
For yet alwey many of the pepyl dredde
Lest the Marlis wolde no wyf wedde
He graunted hem a day suche as hym lest
On whiche he wolde be wedded stikerly
And sayde he did al this at hir request
And they with humble entent buxomly
Knelyng vp on her knees ful reuerently
Hym thankid alle and thus they haue an ende
Of here entent and hom ayeen they wende
And here vp on he took his officers
And comaundid for the feste purueye
And to his pryue knyghtis and squieris
Suche charge yaf as hym list on hem leye
And they to his comandement obeye
And eche of hem doth al his diligence
To do vnto that feste high reuerence

¶ Prima pars Grisildis.

In Oughe fer fro that paleis honourable
There as this Marlis shoop his mariage
Ther stoode a thorp of sighte ful delectable
In whiche that poure folk of that village
Hadden her bestis and her herbigage
And of her labour took hir sustenaunce

Aftir that the erle yaf hem habondaunce
Among these pore men ther duellid a man
Which was yholde purest of alle
But high godd sometyme sende can
In to a litil open stalle
A pore cotage of that thrallhe hym calle
A doughter hadde he fair ynough to sighe
And Griselde this yonge maiden highte
Fond to speke of vertu and of honest beaute
Than was she on of the faireste vnder sonne
And ful poverly yfostrid vp was she
No likerous lust was thorou her hert yronne
But ofter of the welle than of the vyn tonne
She dranke and for she wolde vertu plese
Het was hir list and hir most ese
But though this mayde so tendir were of age
Yet in the breste of hir virginite
Ther was yclosid ripe and sad corage
And in gret reuerence and charite
Her olde pore fader fostrid she
A felde sheep spynnynge on feld she kepte
She wolde not be ydil til she slepte
And when she homward com she wolde kepnge
Wortis or othir herbis tymes ofte
The which she setteth for hir kynnge
And made her bedd harde and nothynge softe
And ay she kepte her fadres lif on lofte
With obeysaunce and diligence
That childe mighte do to the fadris reuerence

Upon on Grisilde this poure creature
Ful of this Marlis he caste his ye
As he wode on huntynge paiuenture
And when it be fyl that he mighte here aspye
He not with wanhouy lokynge of folye
His yen caste on hir but in sad wyse
Upon her chere he wolde hym ofte auyse
Comendynge in his herte her womanhedy
And eke her vertu passing ony wight
Of so yongy age as wel in chere as dede
For though the peple had no greet insight
He considered in vertu ful right
Her beaute and disposid hym that he wolde
Wedde her only yf he euer wedde sholde
The day of weddyngy cam but no wight can
Telle what maner womay it sholde be
For whiche meruayl wondrid many a man
And sayde when they were in priuyte
Wol our lorde lyue yet in vanite
Wol he not wedde allas the while
Why wol he hym self and vs begyle
But natheles this Marlis had do make
Of gemmys set in goldy and in asure
Broches and ringis for grisildis sake
And to her clothingy took the mesure
Of a mayde lik vnto her stature
And eke of her other ornamentis alle
That vnto suche a weddinge sholde falle
The tyme of vndryn oy the same day

Approchith that the Weddinge sholde be
And al the Halles put Wes in array
Both halle and chaunbris ech in his degre
Houshis of office stuffith With greet plente
There maist thou se of deynteous Vitaylle
That may beSouthen as for as lastith Jtayle
This ryal Markis richely arrayd
Lordis and ladies in his companye
The Whiche that to the feste Were praid
And of his retenu the bachelrye
With many a solby of sundry melodye
Unto the Vilage of Whiche I tolde
In this array the right Wey they holde
Griselde of this good Wood sul Jnocent
That for her shappy Was al this array
To sette Watir atte Welle is she Went
And compth hoom as sone as euer she may
For Wel she herde say that illke day
The the Markis sholde Wedde e yf she mighte
She Wolde fayne haue seyn som of that sighte
She thoughte she Wolde With othir maidens stonde
That beey my felowes in our dote and se
The Markesse and therfore Wol J fonde
To doon at hoom as sone as it may be
The labour Whiche longeth to me
And thanne y may at leyser here beholde
Yf she this Wey Unto the castel holde
And as she Wolde ouer the thresshold goon
The Markis cam and gan her forto calle

And she set down her water pot anone
Besides the threshold in an oxes stalle
And down lp on her knees she gan to falle
And with sad contenaunce kneling stylle
Til she hadde herd what was the lordis wille
This thoughtful Marlis spak vnto the mayde
Ful sobirly and sayde in this manere
Where is your fadir o Grisildis he sayde
And she with reuerence and humble chere
Answerde lord he is al redy here
And in she goth without enlengir let
And to the Marlis she her fader set
He by the hond than took this olde man
And sayde thus whan he had hym aside
Janycula I ne may ne I ne can
The plesaunce lenger of my herte hyde
Yf that thou louchesauf that so betyde
Thy doughter wol I take or that I wende
As to my wyf vnto our lyues ende
Thou louest me I woot it wel certayn
And art my feithful liege man bore
And al that liketh me I dar wel sayn
It liketh the and specially therfore
Tel me that poynt that I sayde before
And yf thou wolt vnto that purpos drawe
To take me as for thy sone in lawe
This sodeyn caas this man was stonedy so
That redy he ne wyst what thyd and al qualmyng
He stoody vnneth sayde he wordis mo

But only thus lordy quod he my Willynge
Yes as ye Wil nat ageynes your likynge
I Wol no thynge ye be my lordy so dere
Right as your ast gouernyth this matere
Yet Wol I quod this Markis softely
That in your chambir I ye and the
Haue a collacion and Wotist thou Why
For I Wol axe yf it here Wil be
To be my Wyf and veule her after me
And al this shal be do in thy presence
I nyl not spekē out of thyn audience
And in the Chambir Whyle they Were aboute
Her tretees Whiche ye shal as after here
The pepl cam in to the hous al Withoute
And Wondrid hem in hold honest manere
And she so tentifly kepte her fadir dere
But litterly Grisilde Wonder mighte
For neuer erst sawe she such a sighte
No Wonder it Was though she Were stonedy
To se so greet a geest come in that place
She neuer Was to suche gestis y Wonedy
For Whiche she lokidy With ful pal face
But shortly this mater forto chace
These ben the Wordis that the Markis sayde
To this benigne feithful mayde
Grisilde he sayde ye shulle Wel vnderstonde
It likith vnto your fadir and vnto me
That I you Wedde and eke it may so stonde
As I suppose that ye Wil that it so be

But thyse demaundis aye I first quod he
That sith it shal be doon in hasty wyse
Wol ye assent or ellis you auyse
I say thus be ye redy with goody herte
To al my lust and that I freely may
As me lest thinkith though ye lalaghe or smerte
And never ye to grutche nyght ne day
What I say ye that ye say not ones nay
Nother be word ne by frolbrynge contenance
Where this and I you here assure affiaunce
Wondring vp on thyse wordis wonderly for dede
She sayde lordy indigne and vnworthy
I am to suche honour as ye me bede
But as ye wil your self right so wil I
And here I swere that never willyngly
In word or thought I wol you disobeye
Forto be dede thogh me were loth to deye
This is ynough Grisilde myn quod he
And forth he goth with a ful sobir chere
Out atte dore and after cam she
And to the pepyl he sayde in this manere
This is my wyf quod he that stondeth here
Honourith her and louith her I you pray
Who so me louith ther is no more to say
And for that no thing of her olde gere
She sholde bringe in to his hous he lady
That women sholde dispoyle here there
Of whiche theise ladyes were not ful glady
To handel her clothis where in she was clady

Bot natheles this mayde knyght of hewe
Fro foot to hed they clothidy her newe
Her heris they kempe that lay vntressidy
Ful vnely and with her fyngris smale
A crowne on her hedy they haue y dressidy
And set hir ful of olbeches grete and smale
Of here array what sholde I make a tale
Amonge the pepyl her kneld for her fairnes
Whan she translatidy was in suche riches
This markis hath her spousidy with a ryngy
Wrought for the same cause and thay her set
Vpon ay hors snow white ful wel amblyngy
And to his Paleis or he lengir let
With ioyful pepil that her ladde and met
Conueyedy her and thus the day they spendy
In reuel til the sonne gan descende
And shortly forth this tale forto chace
I say that to this newe Marchesse
Godi hath suche fauour sent of his grace
That it ne sempdy be no lihtlynes
That she was bory and fedy in rudenes
As in a cyte or in an oxis stalle
But norisshedy in an Empreours halle
To euery wight she wosey is so deve
And worshipful that folk there she was bone
And from hir birthe kneld her peer by pere
Amonge twelfdy they but dar̃te haue swore
That to Janyuil of whiche I spak before
The dughter was as by conieture

Hym thoughte she was another creature
For that euer vertuous was she
She was encreced in suche excellence
Of the wyse godes set in high bounte
And so discreet and fair of eloquence
So benigne and digne of reuerence
And coude so the peples hertis enbrace
That eche her loued that lokid in her face
Not only of Saluces in the toun
Publisshed was the bounte of hir name
But eke beside in many a Regioun
If one sayde well another said the same
So spredde of her bounte the name
That men and women both yong and old
Goth to Saluces vp on her to be hold
This walter lowly but nat rially
Wedded hath with fortunat honeste
In goddis pees liueth ful honestly
At home and outward grace ynough had he
And for he saw that vnder lowe degre
Was honest vertu hid the pepyl hym held
A prudent man and that is seen ful selde
Not only this Grisilde thorow hir witt
Coude al the feet of wifly humbilnes
But yet when that she was requirid it
The comune profit eke coude she redresse
Ther nas discorde rancour ne hevynesse
In al the londe that she it coude a pees
And wysely bringe hem in reste and pes

Thogh her husbonde were absent or none
Of gentilmen or other of that contre
Were wroth she wolde kynge hem attone
So wyse and ryche wordis hadde she
And in Jugement so grete equyte
That she from heuyn sent was as men wendy
Pepil to saue and euery wrongy to amende
That longe tyme after that this Grisilde
Was wedded she a doughter hady bore
All hady her leuyr bore a knaue childy
Glady was the Markes and the folk therfore
For though a mayde childy cany al before
She may vnto a knaue childy atteyne
Ye litlikede syy she nys not kareyne

Secunda pars.

Ther fill as it befallith ofte tyme mo
Wokey þ this childy hady sokyy but a thrwh
This markis in his herte he thoughte so
To tempte his wyf her sadnes to knowe
That he ne mighte out of his herte athrowe
Forbere, wherfore he purposidy on a day
This maruaylous desire his wyf to assaye
He hadde assaidy here ynough ofte tyme before
And fondy her euer goody What nedith it
Her forto tempte alwey more andy more
Thogh sumy may preyse it for a subtil wit
But as for me y say ful euyl it sit
To assay a wyf whan that it is no nede
And put her in angwish andy in drede

For which this markis wroughte in this maneve
He cam a lone a nyght there as she lay
With sterne face and ryght ogly chere
And sayde thus Grisilde quod he that day
That I you took fro your poure aray
And put you in astaat of high noblesse
Ye haue not that forgotyn as I gesse
I say Grisilde the present dignite
In which I haue put you as I trowe
Makith you not foryetful forto be
That I you took in poure astat full lowe
For ony werk ye muste your self knowe
Take hede of every word what I seye
Ther is no wight that heryth but we tweye
Ye woot your self how that ye cam here
In to this hous it is not longe ago
And though to me ye be lothe leef and dere
Unto my gentils ye be no thyng so
They say to hem it is greet shame and woo
Forto be subiect and bere in seruage
To the that born art in so smal a vilage
And namely sith thy doughter was y bore
These wordes haue they spoken douteles
But I desire as I haue don before
To lyue my lif with hem in reste and pes
I may not in this cas be recheles
I moot doon with thy doughter for the beste
Nat as I wolde but as my peple leste
And yet god woot this is ful loth to me

But natheles Wiethoute your Witynge
I Will not do but thus I Wol quod he
That ye to me assente as to this thinge
Shew nowe your patience in your Werkynge
That ye me highte and swore in your Willynge
That day that made Was our mariage
Whan she hadde herde al this she not answerde
Neither in Word neyther in chere ne in countenance
For as it semyde she Was not agreuyde
She saith lorde al lieth in your plesaunce
My childe and I With hertily obeyssaunce
Bere your obeysaunce and ye may bothe saue & spille
Your obeysaunce thinge do ye after your Wille
Ther may be no thinge so gode my soule saue
Likynge to you that may displese me
Ne I desire no thinge in ony Wyse to haue
Ne drede forto lese saue only ye
This Wyl is in myn herte and euer shal be
No lengthe of tyme or deth may this deface
Ne turne my corage to noon othir place
Glad Was this Markis of her answeringe
But yet it semyde as he Were not so
Al derry Was his chere and his lokynge
Whan that he sholde out of the chambir go
Sone after this a furlonge Wey or tWo
He priuely hath tolde al his entent
Unto a mayde and to his Wyf hym sent
Of maner of a sergeaunt Was this priuy may
The Whiche that feithful ofte in sounde had

In thynges grete and ek ek ſuche ſelde wel any
Done execucioun in thynges ſadde
The lord knewe weel that he hym louyd ẽ dradde
And when this ſeriaunt wiſte his lordes wyl
In to the chambre he ſtalkyd hym ful ſtylle
Madame he ſayde ye moot forgeue it me
Though I do thing whiche I am conſtreyned
Ye be ful wyſe and ful wel knowe ye
That lordes heſtis may nat be ſayned
They may weel be bewayled or compleyned
But men muſte nede vnto her luſt obeye
And ſo wol I ther is nomore to ſey
This child I am comanded forto take
And ſpak nomore but out the child he hent
Diſpitouſly ẽ gan a cheere ful hidous to make
As though he wolde haue ſleyn it or he went
Vnſyde muſte al ſuffre and conſent
And as a lamb ſhe ſitteth meke and ſtylle
And lete this cruel ſeriaunt do his wylle
Suſpecions was the fame of this may
Suſpect his face ſuſpect his wordes alſo
Suſpect the tyme in whiche he this began
Alas her doughter that ſhe louyd ſo
She wende he wolde haue ſleyn it tho
But natheles ſhe neyther wepte ne ſiked
Conformyd to that the Markis liked
But at the laſte ſpeke thenne ſhe began
And mekely ſhe to the ſeriaunt prayde
So as he was a verray gentilman

That she muste her childe kisse onys or it deide
And in her arme she the litil childe leyde
With sul sadde face and gan the childe to blis
And lullide it and after gan it kisse
And thus she sayde in her benigne vois
Farwel my childe I shal the neuer se
But sith I haue the marked With the holy croys
Of thilke fader blessed moot thou be
That for vs deide vpon the croys of tre
Thy soule litil childe I hym betake
For this nyght shalt thou dye for my sake
I trowe that to a norice in this caas
Yt hadde be grete wo Wel hir forto se
Wel might a moder than haue cride allas
But natheles so sadde and so stedfast Was she
That she endurid al aduersite
And to the seriaunt mekely she sayde
Haue here agayn your litil yonge mayde
Gooth now quod she and doth my lordis heste
But o thing Wol I pray you of your grace
That but my lorde forbade it you atte leste
Burieth this litil body in som place
That bestis ne foulis it to Rase
But he to that purpos no Word Wolde say
But tok the childe and Went vp on his Way
This seriaunt cam to the lord agayn
And of Grisildis Wordis and of her chere
He tolde hym point by point short and pleyn
And hym presentid With his doughter dere

Sumwhat this lordy hath volbeth in his manere
But natheles his purpos holdy he stylle
As lordis doon whan they wyl haue her wylle
Andy bady his seriaunt that he priuely
Sholde the childy softe wynde andy wrappe
With al the circumstaunce tendirly
Andy carye it in a cofir or in a lappe
But oy peyne of his hedy of forto swappe
That nomay sholde knowe of this entent
Ne whens it cam ne whithir that it wont
But at boleyn to his fustir dere
That illke tyme of Maurye Was Countes
He sholde it take andy shewe hir this matere
Besekyngy here to doher besinesse
This childy to fostir in alle gentilnes
Andy whoos childy that it is he bady hym hyde
From euery wight for aught that may betyde
The seriaunt goeth & hath fulfilledy this thingy
But to this Markis nold retorne we
Ful nold goth he ful faste Imagenynge
Yf he his wyues chere he mighte se
Or by her wordy perceyue that she
Were chaungidy but neuer yet coude he fynde
But euer in oy lik sady andy kynde
As glady as humbil as besy in seruise
Andy eke in loue as she Was wont to be
Was she to hym in euery maner wyse
Ne of hir doughter not oWordy spak she
Noy accident for noy aduersite

Was seyn in her ne nouer her doughter name
Ne temptyd she in erneste ne in game

¶ Tercia pars ¶

IN this astat ther past be four yere
Er she with childe Was but as gody Wolde
A may childe she bare be this Walter
Ful gracious and feir forto beholde
And Whan that folke it to his fadir tolde
Nat only he but al his contre mery
Was for this childe and gody they thanke & bery
Whey it Was two yer olde and fro the breste
Departid from his norice vp on a day
This Markis caughte yet anothir lest
To tempte his Wyf yet ofter yf he may
Vnmedeles Was she temptid in assay
But Wedded men can no mesure
Whey that they fynde a patient creature
Wyf quod this Markis ye haue herd this
My pepil breith heuy sikirly our mariage
And namely sith my sone I born is
Now it is Wors than euer in al our age
The murmur sleth myn herte and my corage
For to myn eris comyth the vois so smerte
That it sul nygh destroid hath myn herte
Now say they thus Whey Walter is agoon
Thay shal the blood of Jamcula succede
And be our lord for other haue We noon
Suche Wordis saith my peple out of drede
Wel ought I of suche murmur take hede

For certeinly I drede suche sentence
Though they not pleyne in myn audience
I wolde lyue in pees yf that I myghte
Wherfore I am disposyd ful entirely
As I his sustre seruyd be myghte
Right so thinke I to serue hym priuely
This warne I you that ye not sodenly
Out of your self for no wo sholde affraye
Be pacient and ther of I you pray
I haue quod she saide thus and euer shal
I wol no thinge in no maner certeyn
But as you list nothinge greuith me at al.
Though that my doughter & my sone be slayn
At your comaundement this is forto sayn
I haue had no part of childeren eldeyn
But first seelnes and after woo and peyne
Ye lord our lord doth with your olden thinge
Right as you list axeth no leue of me
For as I lefte at hoom al my clothinge
Whan I cam first to you right so quod she
Lefte I my wyl and al my liberte
And took your clothinge Wherfore I you pray
Doth your plesaunce I wyl your lust obey
And certis yf I hadde ony prescience
Your wyll to knowe or ye your lust me tolde
I wolde it do Withoute negligence
But nolh I woot your lust and what ye wolde
Al your plesaunce ferm and stabil I holde
For weste I that my deth myghte do you ese

Right gladly wolde I dye you to please
Deth may not make no maner of comparison
Vnto youre loue/and when this Markis say
The constaunce of his wyf he axt a day
His yen vpcast and wonderly that she may
In pacience suffir al this maner away
And forth he goth with deery contenaunce
But to his herte it was ful gret displesaunce
This bygle seriaunt in the same wyse
That her doughter aughte right so he
Or wors yf mery any wors deuyse
Hath hent her sone that ful was of beaute
And euer in one so pacient was she
That she no chere of heuynes
But kist hym sone and after gan hym bles
Saue this she prayde hym yf that he mighte
Her litil sone he wolde in the erthe graue
His tendir lymes delicat in sighte
Fro foulis and fro bestis it to saue
But she noy other answer of hym mighte haue
He went his wey as he no thing thoughte
But to koleyne he it tenderly broughte
This Markis wondred euer lenger the more
Vp on her pacience and that she
Hadd not knowe sothly therfore
That parfitly her childeren loued she
He wolde haue wendd of sony subtilte
And of malice and for cruel corage
That she hadde suffridd this with sadd visage

But well he knew that nyght hym self certeyn
She louyd her children best in euery wyse
But now of women wolde I ape ful feyn
Yf thyse assayes myght not suffyse
What coude a sturdy husbonde more deuyse
To preue her wifhoody or her stedfastnes
And he contynuynge euer in his sturdynes
But ther ley folk of suche maner condicion
And so wilful suche assayes to make
That ay not stynte of here entencion
But right as they were bounden to a stake
They wol not of hir firste purpos slake
Right so this Marlis hath fully purposed
To tempte his wyf as he was first disposed
He waytid as yf he word or contenaunce
That she to hym was chaungid of corage
But neuer coude he fynde ony variaunce
She was ay in on herte and in visage
And the ferther that she was in age
The more trewe yf it were possibil
She was to hym and the more plesibil
For whiche it semyd thus that of hem two
Ther was but on wil for but as walter leste
The same lust was her plesaunce also
And god bethanked al fyl for the beste
She shewde weel for non worldly vnreste
A wyf as of her self no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect but as her husbond wolde
The slaunder of Walter wonder wyde spradde

That of cruel herte he ful wickidly
For he a poure woman wedded hadde
Hath murderid bothe his childeryn priuely
Suche murmur was among hem comynly
No wonder is for to the peplis ere
Ther any no wordy but that they murdrid were
For whiche there as the pepil ther before
Hadde louid him wel the sklaundre of his defame
Made hem that hym they hatid therfore
To be a murderer is an hateful name
But natheles for erneste or for game
He of his cruel purpos wolde not stynte
To tempte his wyf was al his entent
Whyn that his doughter .xij. yere was of age
He in to the court of Rome in subtil wyse
Enfourmedy of his wil sente his message
Comaundnige hem suche bullis to deuyse
As to his cruel purpos may suffise
Hold that the pope hady as for his peplis reste
That he sholde wedde another wyf yf he liste
I say he hady he sholde counterfete
The popis bullis makyngy mencioy
That he hath leue his firste wyf forto lete
As by the popis olbey dispensacioy
To stynte the rancour of discensioy
Setbene his pepil andy hym this saidy the bulle
The whiche they haue publisshedy atte fulle
The rude pepil as no wonder ne is
Wende ful weel that it hadde be right so

But whan thyse tidyngis cam to Grisildis
Jarme that the herte of here was ful woo
But she y lik sadȝ was euermo
Disposidȝ was this humbyl creature
The aduersite of fortune al to endure
Abidynge euer his lust and his plesaunce
To whom that she was yeuen herte and al
As to his verȝ worldly sufficiaunce
But shortly yf J this storȝ telle shal
This Marlis Writen hath in special
A lettir in whiche he shewith his entent
And secretly to boleyne he hath it sent
To the erle of Saluce whiche hade tho
Weddidȝ his fustar/prayde hym specially
To bryngе hom ayeȝn his childreȝ tho
In honourable staat al openly
But o thingȝ he hym prayde entierly
That he no wight though they didȝ enquere
Sholde not telle whoos childreȝ that they were
But say the mayde shal wеddidȝ be
Vnto the Marlis of Saluces anoȝ
And as this erle was prayde so didȝ he
For atte day set he on his wey is gooȝ
And forth he rodȝ hastly and that anooȝ
Toward Saluce this mayde forto gyde
Here yongȝ brothir ridyngȝ be hir syde
Araidȝ was toward ȝer mariage
This fresshe may ful of gemmys cleer
Her brother whiche, vij. ȝer was of age

Amidy ful fresh in her manere
Andy thus with gret noblesse andy glady chere
Tolbardy Saluces spedyng her iournay
Fro day to day they ridey in her way

¶ Quarta pars.

Among al this astir his wickedy vsage
This Markis is yet about to tempte more
The vttereste preef of her corage
Fully to haue experience andy lore
Yf she were as stedfast as before
He on a day in opey audience
Ful boistously hath saidy here this sentence
Certis Grisilde I hady I nold of plesaunce
To haue you to my wyf for your goodnes
As for your trouthe andy your obeysaunce
Nat for your lynage ne for your riches
But nold knolde I in ferry fothfastnes
That in gret lordship yf I me wol auyse
Ther is gret seruytut in sondry wyse
I may not do as euery plowman may
My peppl constreyneth me forto take
Another wyf andy cryey day be day
Andy eke the peplis vancour forto slake
Concentith it that dar I wel vndertake
Andy trewly thus muche I wol you say
My newe wyf is comyng le the way
Be stronge of herte & loyde anon her place
Andy that dower that ye broughte me
Takith it ayen I yeue you leue of my grace

Retourneth to your fadris hous quod he
No may may alwey haue prosperyte
With auyn herte I rede you to endure
The strook of fortune or of auenture
And she agayn answerde in pacience
My lusty lord quod she I wot & wiste alwey
Hold that betwixt your magnificence
And my pouerte no wight can ne may
Make ony comparison it is no nay
I ne held me neuer digne in no manere
To be your wyf neyther your chamberere
And in this hous there ye me lady made
The high god take I for witnes
And also wisly be my soule glade
I nayr held me lady ne maistres
But humble seruaunt to your worthynes
And euer shal whyle my lif may endure
Aboue ey euery wordly creature
That ye haue so longe of your benignite
Holde me in high nobles and honourey
There as I was not worthy forto be
That thanke I god to whom I prey
Forelde it you ther is no more to sey
Unto my fader gladly wol I wende
And with hym duelle to my lifys ende
There as I was forstrid of a child ful smal
Tyl I be ded my lif there wol I lede
A widow cleen in body herte and al
For seth I yaf to you my maydenhede

I am your trewe wyf it is no dreme
Why shulde suche a lordes wyf to take
Another husbonde or ony man to make
And of your welle wyf god of his grace
So he graunte you welle and prosperite
For I wol gladly yelde her my place
In whiche I was blessful wont to be
For sith it liketh you my lordy quod she
That som tyme were al my hertis reste
That y shal goon I wol go whan ye leste
But there as ye me profre suche dolleere
As I first broughte it is wel in my mynde
It were my wreathid clothis no thing feir
The whiche to me nolde were hardy to fynde
O goode god holde gentil and holde kynde
Ye semyde by your speche and your visage
The day that maiady was our mariage
But soth is said alwey I fynde it trewe
For in effect ypreuyd it is on me
Loue is not olde as whan it is newe
But certis lordy for non aduersite
To dye in this caas it shal not be
That euer in wordy or werk I shal repent
That I you yeue my herte in hool entent
My lordy ye woot that in my fadres place
Ye didy me stripe out of my poure wede
And richely ye me cladyy of your grace
To you broughte y nought ellis out of drede
But feith nakidnes and my maydenhede

And here ayeen my clothinge I restore
And eke my beddynge ryngs for euermore
The remenaunt of your iewellis redy thy be
With ynne your chamber I dar it saufly seyn
Nakid out of my fadres hous quod she
I cam and nakid muste I turne ayeen
All your plesaunce folow wolde I seyn
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smokles out of your paleis went
Ye coude not do so dishoneste a thynge
That ilke wombe in whiche your children lay
Sholde before the peple in my walkynge
Be seye al bare wherfore I you pray
Let me not lik a worm go by the wey
Remembre you myn olden lordy so dere
I was your wyf thogh I vnworthy were
Wherfore in guerdon of my maydenhede
Whiche that I broughte and not ayeen y here
As louchesauf as yeue me to my mede
But suche a smok as I was wont to were
That I therwith may wrye the wombe of here
That was your wyf and here I take my leue
Of you myn olden lordy leeste that I you greue
The smok quod he that thou hast vp on thy stalk
Let is be stylle and here it forth with the
But wel vnmette that wordy he spak
But wente his wey for routhe and pyte
Be for the folk her self stripedy hath she
And in her smok with foot and heer al bare

Toward her fadris hous is she fare
Als folk her solowyn weppyng in her wey
And fortune euer they cursid as they goon
But she fro weppyng kepte her yey depe
Ne in this tyme word spak she noon
Her fadir that thyse tidinges herde anon
Cursid the day and the tyme that nature
Shoop hym to be a lyuys creature
For oute of doute this olde powre man
Was euer suspect of her mariage
For euer he demyd sith it be gan
That whan the lordy hady fulfild his corage
He wolde thinke it were a disparage
To his astat so lowe to light
And loyden her as sone as euer he might
Ayens his doughter hastely goeth he
For he by noyse of folk knewh her comynge
And with her olde cote as it might be
He kouerid her ful sorousfully weppyng
But on her body might he it not bryngе
For rude was the cloth and she more of age
Be dies sele than was her mariage
Than with her fader for a certeyn spaas
Dwellid this flour of wifly pacience
That neuer by her word ne by her face
Before the folk ne in her absence
Ne shewde she that her was doon offence
Ne of hir high astat no remembraunce
Ne had she as by ony maner contenaunce

No wonder was for in her gret astat
Her goste was euer in pleyn humylite
No tender mouth ne herte delicat
No pompe ne semblaunce of rialte
But ful of pacient benignite
Discreet and prideles and ay honourabil
And ay to her husbond meke and stabil
Men speke of Job and most for his humbles
As clerkis whan hem list can wel endite
Namely of men but in soothfastnes
Though clerkis preyse women but alite
Ther can noman in humbles hem aquyte
As woman can ne can he half so evele
As women hen but it be falle of nevele

¶ Quinta pars.

Hero Boleyne this erle of chaupe cam
Of whiche the fame sprong both more & lesse
And in the peplis eris al and som
Was told that he a nevele Marchesse
With hym broughte in suche pompe and riches
That neuer was seye with mannys ye
So ryal a sight in al Westlumbardye
The Marchis whiche that shope & knew al this
Or that this erle was come sente his message
For that sely poure creature the Marquesse
And she with humble herte and glad visage
Not with no swellyng thought in her corage
Cam at his heste and on her knees her set
And reuerently and wisly she hym gret

Sothely quod he my wil is ful entierly
This mayden that wedded shal be to me
Richesse be to morow al so rially
As it is possible in my hous to be
And eke that euery wight in his degre
Haue his astaat in sittinge and in seruise
And hye plesaunce as ye can best deuyse
I haue no woman sufficiaunt certeyn
The chambris forto arraye in ordenaunce
After my list and therfore wolde I fayne
That thyn were al suche maner of gouernaunce
Thou knowest eek of old al my plesaunce
Though thyn array be badde and eyl be seye
Do thy deuoyr yet atte the leste wey
Not only lordy that I am glady quod she
To do your lust but I desire also
You first to please and dy serue in my degre
Withoute fayntynge and shal euer mo
Me for no wel ne for no maner of wo
Me shal ye gost with in my herte stynte
To loue you best with al my trewe entente
And with that word she gan the hous to dighte
And tables forto sette and beddis forto make
And peyned here to do al that she mighte
Prayynge the chamberers for goddis sake
To haste hem and faste swepe and shake
And she the moste seruisabil of alle
Hath euery chambre arayd and eke his halle
Aboute the vndryy gan this erle to lighte

That with hym brought thise nobil children they
For whiche the pepyl ran to se that sight
Of here aray mightily they were besey
And thay amongy hem alle they seye
That Walter was no fool though that hym list
To chaunge his wyf for it was for the best
For she is fairer as they demyn alle
Thay is Grisilde and more tendir of age
And fairer fruyt betwen hem shal falle
And more plesaunce for her high lynage
Her brothir eke so fair of visage
That hem to se the pepyl hath caught plesaunce
Comendynge now the Markis gouernaunce
O sturdy pepyl euer vnsad and vntrewe
Ay vndiscreet and chaungynge as a vane
Here may ye se the pepl how newe
Ay ful of clappinge dere ynow a Jane
And changeable be right as the mane
Your dome is fals your constaunce euyl preuyth
A ful gret fool is he that on you leuith
Thus sayden sad folk in that cite
Whey that the pepyl gadrid up and doun
For they were glad right for the newelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
Nomore of this now make J mencion
But to Grisilde ageyn J wil me dres
And telle here constaunce and her besine
Ful besi was Grisilde in euery thing
That to the feste was tho appertinent

Right nought was she abasshid of her clothinge
Though it were rude and somdele eke to vent
But with clady chere to the yate is she went
With other folk to grete the Markeses
And after doth forth her besynes
With right glady chere she his gestis receyued
And so comyngly eche in his degre
That no defaute noman perceyued
But ay they wondred what she might be
That in so poure aray was forto se
And coude suche honoure and reuerence
And worthyly they preysen her prudence
In al this mene whyle she ne stynt
This mayde and eek hir brother to comende
With al her herte in ful benigne entent
So well that noman coude her prising amende
But atte laste whan that lordis wende
To sitten down to mete he gan to calle
Grisilde as she was besy in the halle
Grisilde quod he as it were in his pley
How likith the my wyf and her beaute
Right well my lord quod she for in good fey
A fairer saw I neuer than is she
I prey to god yeue her good prosperyte
And so hope I he wil to you sende
Plesaunce ynow vnto your liues ende
O thing y beseche you and warne also
That ye not prik with no turmentrye
This tendir mayde as ye haue do mo

For she is fostrid in her norisshinge
More tenderly and to my supposinge
She coude not aduersite wel endure
As coude a poure fostrid creature
And whan this walter sawh her patience
Her glad chere and no malice at al
And he so ofte hadde do to her offence
And she ay constant and sad as a wal
Contynuynge euer here Jnocence ouer al
This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse
To rebe vp on her wifly stedfastnes
This is ynow Grisilde myn quod he
Be now nomore agast ne eyl a payd
Jhaue thy feith and thy benignite
As wel as euer woman was a said
In gret astat or pouerly arraid
Now knowe J dere wyf thy stedfastnes
And here in armys took and gan her kysse
And she for wonder took of hym no kepe
She herde not what thing he to her sayde
She sarid as she hadde stert out of her slepe
Til she out of hir masidnes abreyde
Grisilde quod he be glad that for vs deyde
Thow art my wyf non other Jhaue
Ne neuer Jhadde as god my soule saue
This is thy doughter whiche thou hast supposid
To be my wyf that othir feithfully
Shal be myn heir as Jhaue disposid
Thou kaar hym in thy body ful tendrly

At holeyne haue I kept hem priuely
Take hem ayeen for nolle maist thou nat sey
That thou hast lorn none of thy childeryn eltey
Andy folk that othir wyse haue saydy by me
I warne hem wel that I haue doy this dede
For no malice ne for no cruelte
But forto assay in the thy womanhede
Andy nat to sle my childeryn godys forbede
But forto kepe hem priuely andy stille
Til I thy purpos knewe andy al thy wylle
Whey she this herde in swomyng downy she fallith
For pitous ioye andy after her swomyngy
She to her bothe here yonge childeryn callith
Andy in her armys ful pitously wepynge
Enbracedy hem andy tenderly kissynge
Ful lik a modir with salt teris
She badith bothe her visage andy her eris
O whiche a pitous thingy it was to se
Her swomynge andy her pitous lois to here
Graunt mercy lorde/godys thanke it you qdy she
That ye haue sauedy me my childeryn dere
Nolle recke I neuyr to be dedy euryn here
Sithy y stonde in your loue andy in your grace
No doute of deth ne whay my spirit pace
O tender o dere o yonge childeryn myn
Your wofful moder wende ful stedfastly
That cruel hoyndis or som foul lenyn
Hadde etyn you but godys of his mercy
Andy your benigne fader so tenderly

Hath done you kepe and in that same stounde
Al sodenly she swapt down to grounde
And in her swoune so sadly holdith she
Her childryn eldo whan she gan hem imbrace
That with greet sleyghte and greet difficulte
The childryn from here arm gon they race
O many a tere of many a pitous face
Down ran of hem that stodyn there beside
Ymethe aboute here mighte they abyde
Walter her gladith and her sowle slakith
She risith up and basshith from her traunce
And euery wight her ioye and feste makith
Til she hath caught ayeen her contenaunce
Walter doth her so feithful plesaunce
That it was deynte to se the chere
Betwene hem eldo syn they be met in fere
Thyse ladyes whan they her tyme sey
Haue takyn here and in to chambir anoy
And stripen here out of her rude aray
And in a cloth of gold that bright shoon
With a croune of many a riche stoon
Up on her hed in to the halle they brought
And there she was honoured as she ought
Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende
For euery man and woman doth his might
This day in mirthe and reuel to spende
Til on the welkyn shoon the sterreys light
For more solempnyte in euery mannys sight
This feste was and of greter costage

Thay was the reuel of hir mariage
Ful many a yeer in high prosperite
Lyuen thyse two in concorde and in reste
And richely his doughter maried he
Vnto a lord on of the worthiest
Of al Itail and thay in pes and reste
His wyues fader in his court he kepith
Til the soule out of the body crepith
His sone succedith in his heritage
In reste and pes aftir his fadris day
And fortunat was eke in mariage
Al put he nat his wyf in gret assaye
This worlde is not so strong it is no nay
As it hath been in olde tymes yore
And herkith what this auctor saith therfore
This story is said nat for that wyues sholde
Folowe Grisilde as in high humylyte
For it were importabil though they wolde
But for that euery wight in his degre
Sholde be constant in al aduersite
As was Grisilde wherfore Petrark writith
This story whiche with high stile enditith
For sith a woman was so pacient
Vnto a mortal man wel more we oughte
Receyuen al in good that god vs sent
For gret skill is I preue that he wrought
But he ne tempteth noman that he boughte
As saith saint Jame yf ye his pistil rede
He preueth folk but a day it is no drede

And ſuffrith vs as for our exercise
With ſharpe ſcorgis and aduerſite
Ful ofte to be bete in ſondry wyſe
That ſoo to knowe our wil but certis he
Er we were borȝ knewe al our frelte
And for our beſte is al his gouernaunce
Lete vs lyue thay in vertuous ſuffraunce
But o wordy harkeneth lordingis or I go
It were ful hardy to fynde nowe a dayes
Griſildis in al a contre oy or two
For yf they were put to ſuche aſſayes
The goldy of hem haith ſo harde a layes
With bras for though it be fair at ye
It wolde rathir breſte oy two thay plye
For whiche here for the wyuys loue of Kaithe
Whoos lyf and ſecte mighty godȝ mayntene
In high maiſtrie or ellis were it ſcathe
I wol with lusty herte freſh and grene
Sey you a songȝ to glade you I wene
And leet vs ſtynte of erneſt matere
Herkeneth my songȝ that ſaith in this manere

GRiſilde is dedȝ and eek her pacience
And bothe at onys buriedȝ in Italie
For whiche I crye in open audience
No wedded man ſo hardy be to aſſaile
His wyuys pacience in truſte to fynde
Griſildis for certeyn he ſhal faile
O nobil wyuys ful of prudence
Leet nowȝ humylite your tungis naile

Ne lete no clerk haue cause or diligence
To wryte of you a story of suche meruayl
As of Griselde pacient and kynde
Lest chaucer you Marlow in entrayl
Folowith euer that holdith no silence
But euer answeringe after countirfayl
Be nat a daffith for your Innocence
But sharply take on you the gouernayl
Enprentith wel that lesson in your mynde
For comyn profit seith it may auayll
Ye archebyrys stondith at defence
Syn ye be stronger as is a gret Camayll
Ne suffre not that men do you offence
But slenderer wyues as febil in batayll
Seth egre as a tigre is/fer in ynde
Ay clappinge as a mylle J you counsayl
Ne dredith hem not to hem no reuerence
For though thy husbond armed be in mayl
Thy wordis of thy crabbed eloquence
Shal perse his brest and eke his auentayl
In Jelousie J rede eke that thou hym bynde
And thou shalt make hym wolwche as a quayl
Yf thou be fair there folk been in presence
Shew thou thy visage and thyn apparayll
Yf thou be foul be fre of thy despence
To gete the frendis ay do thy trauayll
Be ay of chere as light as leef on lynde
And leet hym care wepe wryngе and wayl

Verba hospitis.

THis worthy clerk whan endid was his tale
Our oste sayde and swore be cockis bonys
Me were leuer than a barel of ale
My wyf hadde herd this legende onys
This is a gentil tale for the nonys.
As to my purpos wyste ye my wil
But thing that wil not be let it be stylle
Here endeth the tale of the clerk of Oxenforde
And begynneth the Frankeleynes prologe.
THese olde gentil britons in her dayes
Of diuers auctours made her layes
Rymed first in her olden briton tunge
Suche layes with her instrumentis they sunge
Or ellis redde hem for her plesaunce
And on of hem haue I in remembraunce
Whiche I shal say with as good wil as I can
Gert sires be cause I am a lewed man
At my begynnynge first I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lernyd neuer rethorik in certayn
Thing that I speke muste be bare and playn
I slepte neuer on the mount of ynaso
Ne lernyd Marcus Tullius ne Cithero
Colowris knowe I noon withouten drede
But suche colouris as growen in the mede
Or ellis suche as men dien or peynte
Colours of rethorik be to me queynte
My spirit feleth in no suche matere
But and ye list my tale shul ye here

Here endeth the Frankeleyns prologe
And here begynneth his tale.

In armorik that callid is Britayne
Ther was a knyght that loued & dede his payne
To serue ladyes in his beste wyse
And many a labour and meny a gret empayse
He for his lady wrought or she was wonne
For she was on the fairest vnder sonne
And eke therto comyn of high kynrede
That wel vnnethe durste the knyght for drede
Telle here his wo or peyne or distres
But atte laste she for his worthynes
And namely for his meke obeyssaunce
Hath suche appetit caught of his penaunce
That she priuely fil of his accorde
To take hym for hir husbonde and for hir lorde
Of suche lordship as men haue ouyr hir wyuys
And forto lede in the more blisse her lyuys
Of his fre wil he swoor her as he was a knyght
That neuer in al his lyf by day ne by nyght
He sholde of hym take no maistrie
Ageyns her wil ne stithe her Jelousie
But her obeye and folowe her wil in al
As ony louer to his lady shal
Saue the name of souereynte
That wolde he haue for shame of his degre
She thanketh hym of his humblenesse
And sayde sire of your gentilnesse
Ye profer me to haue so large a reyne

Me wolde godȝ neuer betwixȝ vs tweyne
As in my gilt were othir werre or straif
Sire J wil be youre humble trewe wyf
Haue here my trouthe til my herte breſt
Thus ley they bothe in quyete andȝ in reſt
For o thyngȝ ſires ſauely dar J ſay
That frendis eueriche other muſte obeye
In loue andȝ forbere eche other nedely
Yf they wil lyue in pees andȝ holdȝ companye
Whey maiſtrie is come the godȝ of loue anon
Getith her wyngis andȝ fare wel it is goon
Loue is a thingȝ as ony thought fre
For women of kynde deſiren libertee
Andȝ nat to be constreynedȝ as a thrall
Andȝ so doth men yf J the ſothe telle ſhal
Loke who is moſt pacient in loue
He is at his auauntage al a boue
Pacience is an high vertu certeyn
For it venquyſſheth as clerkis ſayn
Thingis that rigour ſhal neuer atteyne
For euery wordȝ men may not chide or pleyne
Lernyth to ſuffre or ellis ſo mot J goon
Ye ſhal it lerne whether ye wil or noon
For in this worlde certeyn no wight is
That he ne doth or ſaith ſometyme amys
Ire ſiknes or conſtellacioun
Wyne woo or chaungynge of complexioun
Cauſith ful ofte to do amys or ſpekyn
Oy euery wrongȝ a nay may not be wrekyn

Affir the tyme muste be temperance
To euery knyght that ony of gouernaunce
And therfore hath this wyse worthy knyght
To lyuyn in her sufferaunce hir behight
And she to hym ful wisly gan swere
That neuer sholde be defaute in here
Here mey may se in humble wyse accorde
Thus hath she take her seruaunt and her lord
Seruaunt in loue and in mariage
Thay was he bothe in lordship and in seruage
Seruage nay but in lordship aboue
Sithe he hath bothe his lady and his loue
His lady certis and his wyf also
The which lalbe and loue accordith therto
And why he was in his prosperite
Home with his wyf he goth to his contre
Not fer fro Padmak his dwellyng was
Where as he lyuyth in blis and in solas
Who coude telle but he that weddid hath he
The ioye the ese and the prosperite
That is betwix an husbond and his wyf
A yeer or more lestith this blisful lyf
Til that this knyght of which I spak thus
That of kynrede was clepid Arueragus
Shoop hym to goon a duelle a yeer or twayne
In Engelond that clepid was Britayne
To seke in armys worshipp and honour
For al his lust he sette in such labour
And duellid there two yeer the book saith thus

Now wol I stynte of this Arueragus
And spekē I wol of dorigene his wyf
That louyd her husbondy as her lyf
For his absence wepith she and siketh
As doy thyse gode wyuys whey hym liketh
She mourneth waketh waylith & pleynyeth
Desire of his presence so her distreyneth
That al this wyde worlde she set at nought
Her frendis that knewh hir they thought
Here to comforte in al that euer they may
They prechyn here they techen here nyght and day
That causeles she sleeth her self allas
And euery comfort possible in that cas
They do to here and al her besines
To auoyde her sorwh and her heuynes
Men molde so longe graue in a stoon
Ye processe as ye knowhen euerichon
Til som figure ther ymme pryntidy be
So longe haue they comfortedy here tyl she
Receyuedy hath by hope and by reson
The emprentinge of her consolacion
Throwh whiche her sorwh began to aswage
She may not alwey duryn in suche arage
And eke Arueragus in al this care
Hath sent her lettris hom of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely agayn
Or ellis hadde this sorwh her hert slayn
And thus they her sorwhes for to slake
Prayde her on their knees for goddis sake

To come and Pome her in company
Alle to dryuen her derk fantesie
And finally she graunted that requeste
For wel she sawe it was for the beste
How stoode her castel faste by the se
And ofte with her frendis walkid she
Here forto disporte vpon the bank only
Where she many shippis and bargis sy
Sayling her cours where hem list to go
But yet was that a parcel of her wo
For to her self ful ofte allas sayd she
Is ther no ship so many as I se
Wolde bringe hoom my lord than were my hert
Al warisshid of his bittir peynys smert
Anothir tyme she wolde sitte and thinke
And caste her yen doun ward from the brynke
But whan she sawe the grisly rockis blake
For verry feer wolde her herte quake
That on her feet she mighte not sustene
Than wolde she sit doun vp on the grene
And pitously on the see with sighes olde
And saith right thus with herte colde
Eterne god that thorow thy purueaunce
Ledist the worlde by certeyn gouernaunce
In ydil as ye say ye no thinke make
But lord this grisly rockis blake
That soldney rathir vnto soul confusion
Of werke than to ony maner creacion
Of suche parfit god wyse and stabil

Why haue ye wrought this werk vnresonabil
For by this werke (north south west ne est
Ther nys y sostrid may brid ne best
Yt doth no good to my wit but amoieth
Se ye not lorde how mankynde it destwieth
Ay hundrid thousandy bodyes of mankynde
Haue wekis slayn al though they be not in mynde
Syn mankynde is so fair a part of thy werk
Thou it maad first lik to thyn owen merk
Thay semyth it ye haue do a gret charite
Toward mankynde how might it thay be
That ye suche menys make it to destwien
Suche meues do no good but amoien
I woot wel clerkis wol say as hem list
Be argumentis that al is for the best
Though I ne can the causis wel knowe
But that god that made the wynd to blowe
As kepe my lord this is my conclusion
To clerkis lete I al disputacion
But wolde god that alle thyse pockis blake
Were sonkyn in to helle for his sake
Thyse wekis sle my herte for seer
Thus wolde she say with many a pitous teer
Here frendis salue that it was no disport
To wonyn be the see but discomforte
And shapen forto ply somwhere elkis
They ledyn here by faueris and by wellis
And in other places dilectablis
They daunsyn and pleyn atte ches & atte tablis

So on a day right on the morow tide
Vnto a gardyn that was there beside
In whiche that they lady made her ordynaunce
Of vitayl and of other purueaunce
They goon and pleyn hem al the longe day
And this was in the fyrste morow of May
Whiche may hath peintid with her soft shoures
This gardyn ful of leuys and of flourys
And craft of mannys hond so curiously
Arraid hath this gardyn trewly
That never was ther gardyn of suche pris
But yf it were the verry paradise
The odour of flourys and the fresh sighte
Wolde haue maad any herte lighte
That euer was born but yf gret sikenes
Or to gret sorow held it in distres
So ful it was of beaute with plesaunce
Anon after dyner gonne they daunce
And songn also saue dorigene alone
Whiche made alwey her compleynt & hir mone
For she ne saw hym in the daunce go
That was her husbond and her loue also
But natheles she must her tyme abyde
And with good hope lete her sorowes slyde
Vp on this daunce amongn other men
Daunsid a squier before dorigene
That fressher was and Jolier of assay
As to my doome than is the monthe of May
He singith daunsith passingn any other man

That is or was syn the worlde began
Therwith he was yf men sholde hym discryue
On of the beste sarynge men on lyue
Yonge strongy vertuous and wyse
And wel belouyd and holdyn in gret prise
And shortly yf I the soth telle shall
Vnlbytynge of this Dorigene at al
This lusty squier seruaunt to venus
Whiche that clepid was Aurelius
He louyd her best of ony creature
Two yeer or more as was his auenture
But neuer durste he telle here his greuaunce
Withoute the ayp dranke he al his penaunce
He was despeyred no thinge durste he sey
Saue in his songis somdele wolde he wrey
This was in general his compleynynge
He said he louyd and belouyd no thinge
Of suche mater made he many layis
Songis compleyntis rondels virayls
Holb that he durste not his sorwb telle
But languyng as fier doth in helle
And dye he sayde he muste as did Ekko
For narcisus that durst not telle his wo
In other maner than ye here nolb say
He durste he not his wo to hir bewray
Saue pauenture at festes and daunsis
There yonge folk keppyn her obseruaunces
It may wel ley he loked in her face
In suche a wyse as may that ayey grace

But no thyng wiste she of his entent
Natheles it happid or they thens went
Because that he was her neyghebour
And was a man of worship and honour
And hadde knowen hym of tymes yore
They falleyn in speche and so more and more
Ynto his purpos dreth Aurelius
And when he sawh his tyme he saidy thus
Madame quod he by godyn that this worlde made
So that I wiste I myghte your herte glade
I wolde that day that your Arueragus
Went ouer the se that I Aurelius
Hady gone there I sholde neuer come ayeyn
For wel I woot my seruise is in veyn
My guerdon is but brestyng of myn herte
Madame reweth on my peynys smerte
Here at your feet godyn wolde I were legraue
For as wisly as godyn my soule saue
I ne haue as nowh no more leyser to seye
Haue mercy sweete or ye wol do me deye
She gayn to loke vp on this Aurelius
Is this your wil quod she and say ye thus
Neuer yet quod she wist I what ye ment
Ne neuer vnderstode I your entent
But that godyn that yaf me soule and lif
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewh wif
In wordyn ne in werk as fer as I haue wyt
I wil be his to whom I am knyt
Take this for fynal answer as of me

But after thay in pley thus saidy she
Aurely saidy she be high god above
Yet wol I graunte to be your loue
Syn I se you so pitously compleyne
Loke what day fro Englondy to britaigne
Ye remeue al the rockis stony be stony
That they ne lette ship ne boot to gony
I say whan ye haue made this coste so clene
Of rockis that ther is no stony I seey
Than wol I loue you best of ony may
Haue here my trouthe in al that euer I may
For I woot that it shal neuer betyde
Let suche folye out of your herte a slyde
What deynte sholde a may haue in his lyf
Forto go loue anothir mannys wyf
Andy her hady whey so that hym likith
Aurilius ful sore ofte he sikith
Is ther none other grace in you quod he
Nay by that lordy that made me
Wo was Aurily whan he this herde
Andy with a sorowful herte he thus answerde
Madame quod he this were impossibil
Than muste I dye in sodeyn deth horribil
Andy with that wordy he turnedy hym anoy
Tho cam her other frendes many oy
Andy in the alleyes romedyn vp an doury
Andy no thingy wistyn of this conclusion
Andy sodenly begonnen reuel newe
Til the brighte sonne lost his hewe

For the occident hadde vefte the ſonne her light
This is as muche to ſay as it was nyght
And hoom they goon in ioye and ſolas
Saue only Troylus Criſeus allas
He to his hous is goon with ſorowful hert
He ſaith that he ne may from his deth aſtert
He ſaith that he felith his herte colde
Vnto heuyn his hondis he gan holde
And on his knees bare he ſet hym doun
And in Pauynge ſaith this oriſon
For lerry Woo out of his Wit he brayde
He nyſte What he ſpak but thus he ſayde
With pitous herte his pleynt hath begonne
And his prayer made firſt to the ſonne
He ſaith Appollo god and gouernour
Of euery planet herte tre and flour
That yeuyſt aſtir thy declinacion
To eche of hem his tyme and his ſeſon
And thyn herborow chaungith lolde and hye
Therfore my lord caſt ye your ye
On Troylus Anely Whiche am but lory
Lo lord my lady hath my deth ſWorn
Withouten ony gilt but thy benignite
Vpon my dedly herte haue ſom pyte
But Wel I Woot Phebus yf ye liſt
Ye may me helpe ſaue my lady beſt
Now touchauf that I may you deuyſe
How that I may be holpen and in What Wyſe
Your bliſful ſuſtir Lucyna the ſhene

That of the see clif goddesse is and quene
Though Neptunus haue dyte in the see
Yet Empresse aboue hym is she
Ye knowe wel lordy right as her desire
Is to be quyckened and lightened of your fyre
For which she folowith you ful besily
Right so the see desirith naturelly
To folow her and she that is goddes
Bothe in the see and ryuers more and les
Wherfore lordy Phebus this is my requeste
Do this miraklil or do myn herte hreste
That thou next at this opposicion
With ynne whiche signe shal be the lioun
As praieth her so greet a floody to bringe
That fyue fadym at the leest it ouer springe
The hieste folk that is in al Bretayne
And leet this floody endure yeris tweyne
Thay certis to my lady may I sey
Holdith your hest the wiklis be alwey
Lordy Phebus this miraklil do for me
Pray here that she go no faster cours thay ye
I say thus pray your sustir that she go
No sastir cours thay ye in yeris two
Thay shal she be at euene ful alway
And springe floody laste bothe nyght and day
And but ye vouchesauf in suche manere
To graunte me my souereyn lady dere
Pray her to synke euery folk a doun
Into helle her owen derk mansioun

Vnder the ground there Pluto dwellith yn
Or neuer shal I my lady Wyn
Thy tempil in delphose Wol I selke
Lord Phebus se the teris on my chelke
And of my payne haue som compassion
And With that Word in swomynge he fil adoun
And longe tyme he lay in a traunce
His brothir Whiche kneld his penaunce
Vp caught hym and to bedde hath hym brought
Disperyd in this turment & in this thought
Lete I this Wofull creature ly
Chese he Whether he Wol lyue or dy
Ameragus With hele and honour
As he that Was of cheualrye the flour
Is comyn hoom and othir Worthy men
A blisful herte hath now dorigen
That hast thy blissful husbond in thyn armys
The fresh knyght the Worthy may of armys
That louith the as his owen hertis lyf
No thing list he to be ymaginatyf
If ony Wight hadde spoke Whylis he Was oute
To her of loue ther of hadde he no doute
He not entendith to suche matere
But daunsith iustith and makith good cheer
And thus in ioye and blis I lete hem duelle
And of the sik Aurilius Wol I telle
In langour and in turment furious
Two yeer and more lay this Aurilius
Or ony foot he mighte on erthe goon

Comfort in this tyme hadde he noon
Saue his brothir Whiche Was a clerk
He knelw al this Woo and al this Werk
For to noon other creature certeyn
Of this mater he durste no Word seyn
Vnder his brest he bare it more secree
Thay euer did Phamphilus or Galathe
His brest Was hool Without forto seen
But in his hert ay Was the awlw keen
And Werl I knolwe of Surgeture
In surgerye ful perlous is the cure
But men mighte touche the awlw or com therby
His brother Wepith and Waylith priuely
Tyl atte laste hym fyl in remembraunce
That Whylis he Was at Orliaunce in Fraunce
As ponge clerkis that been liliorous
To redyn artis that been curious
Seekyn in euery halke and euery herne
Partauler science forto lerne
He hym remembrid that vp on a day
In orliaunce in a book that he say
Of magik naturel With his felolw
That Was that tyme a bacheler of lalwe
Al Were he there to lerne another craft
Had priuely vp on his deske laft
Suche a book as spak moche of operacions
And of many dyuers coniuracions
That longen to the mone and suche foly
As in our dayes is not Worth a flye

For holy chirche ſaith in our beleue
He ſuffreth not illuſion vs to greue
And why this book was in remembraunce
Anon for ioye his herte gan to daunce
And to hym ſelf he ſayde priuely
My brother Warriſshed ſhal be haſtely
For I am ſiker ther be ſciences
Be whiche men make diuers apparences
Whiche alle thyſe ſubtil tregetours ply
For ofte at feſtis haue I herd ſeye
That tregetours with hym an halle large
Haue made come in water in a barge
And in the halle rowen vp and doun
Som tyme hath ſemed come a greet flood
And ſom tyme flouris ſpryngyng in a mede
Som tyme wyne and grapis whyte and rede
Som tyme a Caſtel of lyme and ſtone
And when he liſteth it voideth anon
Thus ſemyth it to many a mannys ſight
Now thus conclude I thus yf I might
At ordaunce ſom old felow fynde
That hadde the monys manſions in mynde
Or other magik naturel aboue
He ſholde wel make my brother haue his loue
For whiche apparence a clerk may make
To mannys ſight that al the rockis blake
Of Britayne were voyded euerichoon
And ſhippis be the brynkis comyn and goon
And in ſuche fourme endure a woke or two

Thay were my brothir warisshid of his vo
Thay muste she nedis holde her beheste
Or ellis he shal shame her at the leste
What sholde I make a lenger tale of this
Vnto his brotheris bedy I come he is
And suche comfort he yaf hym forto goon
To Orliaunce that he vp stert anoon
And on his wey thay onwardy is he fare
In hope forto be lissid of his care
Whey they were come almost to that cite
But yf it were a tvo forlongy or thre
A yongy clerk Romynge hym self they mete
Whiche that in latyn thriftely hem grette
And aftir he sayde a wonder thingy
I knowe quod he the cause of your comynge
And er they further ony foot wente
He tolde hem al what was here entent
This britoury clerk hym axidy of felawys
The whiche he hady knowen in oldy dayes
And he answeridy hem that they dedy were
For whiche he wepte ful meny a tere
Doury of his hors Aurilius light anoy
And with this magicien forth he gay goon
Hoom to his hous andy made hym wel at ese
Hym lackidy no vitayl that hem mighte plese
So wel araidy hous as there was ony
Aurilius in his lyf salv neuer noon
He shewde hym or he wente to Soupre
Forestis Parkis ful of wylde dere

There sawe he hertis with her hornys hye
The grettiste that were euer seye with ye
He sawe of hem an hundrid sleyn with houndis
And some of arwes blede and bitter woundis
He sawe where wounded were thyse wilde deer
The fawcons vp on a fair ryuer
That with her beckis gan hewons sleyn
To sle the knyghtis iustynge in a pleyn
And aftir this he did hym suche plesaunce
That he hym shewde his lady in a daunce
In whiche hym self daunsed as hym thoughte
And when this maister ꝑ this magik wrought
Sawe it was tyme he clappid his hondis to
And farewel our reuel was al ꝙ do
He remeued neuer out of his hous
Whyle they sawe all this meruayllous
But in his stody there as his bokis be
They sittyn stille while they sawe this they thre
To hym this maistir callid his squier
And sayde hym thus is redy our soper
Almoste an hour it is I vndertake
Sey I you lady our soper for to make
When that thyse worthy men wente with me
In to my stody there as my bokis be
Sire quod the squier whan it liketh yow
Yet is al redy though ye wil right now
Go we sone quod he it is for the beste
Thyse armorous folk sumtyme moste haue reste
And aftir soper fyl they in trete

What ſum̄e ſholde the maiſtris guerdoun be
To remeue alle the welkis in Britaigne
And eek from gerounde to the mouth of ſayne
He made hym ſtraunge he ſwoor ſo godȝ hym ſaue
Leſſe than a thouſandȝ poundȝ he wolde not haue
Me gladly for that ſum̄e he nolde not goon
Aurilius with blisful herte anon
Saith thus fy on a thouſandȝ poundȝ
The wyde worlde whiche men ſay is roundȝ
I wolde it yeue yf I were lordȝ of it
This bargayn is ful dryue andȝ ful knyt
Ye ſchul be paidȝ trewlȝ be myn trouthe
But lokith nowȝ for noon negligence ne ſlouthe
Ye tarye vs here no lenger than to morowȝ
Nay quod the clerk haue here myn feith to borowȝ
To bedde he goth Aurilius whan hym leſt
And wel nygh al that nyght he hadde reſt
What for his bargayn andȝ for his hope of blisſe
His wofulȝ herte of penaunce hadde a liſſe
Vpon the morowȝ whan it was day
To Britayne took they the righte way
Aurilius andȝ this Magicien hym beſide
And he deſcendedȝ there they wol abyde
And this was as the book doth remembre
The coldȝ froſty ſeſon of decembre
Phebus hadde wexidȝ was lik latoun
That a fore in his hoot declinacioun
Shone as the burnydȝ goldȝ with ſtremys brighte
But thenne in Capricorne adoun he lighte

Ther as he ſtone ſul pnal I dar wel ſayn
The bitir froſtis with the ſlit of Nayn
Deſtroidy hath the garne in euery yerdy
Jamis ſit by the fyre with dowbyl herde
Andy dryncketh of his bugil horn the wyne
Andy aftir this ale bothe goody andy fry
Andy nowel cryeth euery luſty may
Aurilius doth al that he can
To wayte a tyme of his concluſion
This is to ſay to make illuſion
Be ſuche apparent Jogelrye
I can no termys of aſtrologie
Thy ſhewde that euery wight ſholde wene & ſay
That of Britayne the Rockis were away
Or ellis they were ſonkyn vnder the grounde
So at the laſte he hath his tyme y founde
To make his Jape andy his wreathidnes
Of ſuche a ſuperſticion of curſidnes
His tablis tolentanes forth he brought
Ful wel correctidy it lackidy nought
Neythir his colet ne his eppans yeris
Ne his rotis ne his othir geris
Andy by his centris andy his argumentis
Andy his propoycinel contentis
For his equacions in euery thingy
Andy by his eygth ſpere in his workyngy
He knew ful wel how ſer anath was ſowe
Fro the hedy of that fixe aries howe
That in the .iij. ſpere conſideridy is

Ful subtally he calkied al this
Whan he hade his firste mansion
He knew the remenaunt by proporcion
And knew the risinge of the mone well
And in whos face and signe auenidell
And knew wel the monys mansion
Attendant vnto his operacion
And he knew also wel his other obseruaunces
For suche illusions and suche myschaunces
As ther folk vsedy in tho dayes
For sothe no lenger makith he delayes
But throwh his magik a wolke or elleye
It semyd that al the woklis were aweye
Aurilius yet whiche that despeyrid is
Wher he shal haue hir loue or fare amys
And waytith nyght and day on this miraklil
And when he knew ther was noy obstakil
That koidely were the woklis echoy
Doun to his maistris feet he fyl anoy
And sayde J woful wrecched Aurilius
Thanke you lordy and my lady Ermus
That me haue holpe fro my cares colde
And to the tempil his wey hath he holde
Where as he knew he sholde his lady se
And when he sawh his tyme anoy right he
With dredful herte and humbil chere
Salewidy hath his souereyn lady dere
My right lady quod this woful may
Whom y most drede and loue as J best ay

And loth̄est were in al this worlde displese
Were it for you I haue suche disese
That I moot dye here at your foot anon
Nought wolde I telle you me is wo begon
But certis or I muste dye or pleyne
Ye sle me giltles for verey peyne
But of my deth ye haue no routhe
Thinkith nowh vp on your trouthe
And repente you for that gon̄ aboue
Or ye me sle by cause that I you loue
For Madame wel ye woot what ye haue highte
Not that I chalange ony thing of righte
Of you my souereyn lady but of your grace
But in the gardyn yonder in suche a place
Ye wityn right wel what ye behetyn me
And in myn̄ hond̄ there your trouthe plighte ye
To loue me best/gon̄ woot ye sayde so
Al be it that vnworthy I be therto
Madame I speke for the honour of you
More than forto saue my hertis lif righte nowh
I haue ydo as ye comaunded̄ me
And yf ye vouchesauf ye mowe se
Sith as you list haue your best in mynde
For quyck or ded̄ trewe shul ye me fynde
In you lith to do me lyue or deye
But wel I woot the rockis been a weye
He taketh his leue and̄ she a stoned̄ stood̄
In al her face nas a drope of blood̄
She wende neuer to come in suche a trappe

Allas quod ſhe that euer this ſholde happe
For wende I neuer be poſſibilite
That ſuche a meruayl mighte be
That is ayens the proces of nature
And hoom ſhe goth a ſorouful creature
For ferry feer vnnethe might ſhe go
She wepith and waylith a day or two
And ſwolwyth that tolthe was to ſe
But why it was vnto noman tolde ſhe
For out of towne was goon Arueragus
But to her ſelf ſhe ſpak and ſayde thus
With face pal and ſorouful chere
In her compleynt as ye ſhul aftir here
Allas quod ſhe on the fortune I pleyne
That vnbaar wrappid haſt me in thy cheyne
Fro whiche to ſcape knowe I no ſocour
Saue only deth or to grete diſhonour
One of thyſe two behouyth me to cheſe
But nathles yet haue I leuyr leſe
My lyf than of my body haue a ſhame
Or knowe my ſelf falſe or leſe my name
And with my deth I may be quyt I wis
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf or this
And many a mayde ſleyn her ſelf allas
Rathir than with her body done treſpaas
Yes certes thyſe ſtoryes beriith witnes
Whan. xxx. tiraundis ful of curſidnes.
Hadde ſleyn cruelly Fidon atte feſte
They comaundid his doughtris forto areſte

And keynge hem ferth in despit
Al nakid to fulfille her delit
And on her fadres blood made hem daunce
Up on the pament god yeue hem myscharnce
For whiche the wofull maydens ful of drede
Rathir than they wolde lese her maydenhede
They been priuely stert in to a welle
And dreynt hem self as the bokis telle
They of metey leten enquire and sekе
Of lacedomy fifty maydens eke
On whiche they woldey a done her lecherye
But was eker non of al that company
That she nas sleyn : that with glady entent
Chees rather to dye than to assent
To be oppressid of her maydenhede
Why sholde I thanne to dye be in drede
Lo eke the tiraunt Aristoclides
That louyd a mayde highte Stymphalides
Whey her fader sleyn was on a nyght
Vnto dianes goth she right
And hente the ymage in her hondis two
From whiche ymage wolde she not go
No wight the hondis of here myghte arace
Til she was sleyn right in the place
Wold sith that maydens hadde suche despit
To been dispoylid with mamys delit
Wel oughte a wyf rathir her self to sle
Than be despoylid as thinkith me
What shal I say of Hasdrubaldis wyf

That at Cartage berefte her self her lyf
Whyn that she sawe the romayns wyn the towne
She took her childeryn alle & stroppedy a downe
In to the fyre andy chaas rather to dye
Than ony Romayn didy her vilonye
Hath not Lucrece slayn her self allas
At Rome for she oppressidy was
Of Tarquyne for her thoughte it was a shame
To lyue whan she hady lost her name
The .lvj. maydens of Milleses also
Haue sleyn hem self for verry drede andy woo
Rather than the folk of Galele sholde hem oppresse
Mo than a thousandy storyes y gesse
Coude I telle as touching this matere
Whyn Hellerada was sleyn his wyf so dere
Her self slough andy leet her bloody to glide
In hellaradas oryn wound dis wyde
Andy sayde my body atte leste wey
Ther shal no wight defoylle it yf I may
What shal I of hem mo ensamplis sayn
But so many haue hem self slayn
Wel rathir than they wolde defoulidy be
I wol conclude that is the beste for me
To sle my self than be defouldy thus
I wol be trewe vnto Auerragus
Or ellis sle my self in som manere
Right as dide demecions doughter dere
Be cause she ne wolde defouledy be
Of Oerdasus it is ful greet pite

To rede hold thy doughtris deyde allas
That slough her self in suche a maner caas
As gret pite it was or wel more
The Thebay mayden that for Alchamore
Her self slough right for suche maner woo
And anothir Thebay mayden right so
For one of Macedone hadn her ouyr pressidn
She with her deth her maydenhede redressidn
What shal I sayn of Maceratis wyf
That for suche a caas bereft her self her lyf
Hold trewe eek was also Alcebades
That for his loue to dien rathir chees
Than forto suffre his body vnburyedn to be
Whiche a wyf was Alceste also quodn she
What saith Omere of Penelope
Al grece knowith of her chastite
Parde of lacedomea is writyn thus
That whan at Rome was sleyn Protholomus
No lenger wolde she lyue aftir his day
The same of nobil Prothema telle y may
Withoute Brutus coude she neuer lyue
To whom she hadde her herte al yeue
The parfyt wyf of Archemede
Honouridn is throwh out al Barbarye
O tentquites thy verey chastite
To alle wyuys may a mirrour be
Thus pleyneth Dorigene a day or tweye
Purposinge euer that she wolde dey
But natheles vp on the thridde nyght

Home comyth Arueragus the worthy kinyght
Andy axeth hyre why she wepith so sore
Andy she gay wepe euer lengir the more
Andy told hym al the cas by andy by
How she hady promysedy ignorantly
The squier like as ye haue herdy to fore
Hit nedeth not to reherce hit ony more
This husbondy with glady chere in frendly wyse
Answerde andy sayde as I shal deuyse
Is ther aught ellis Dorigene but this
Nay nay she sayde godi helpe me so as wis
This is to mykil andy it ne were goddis wyl
Ye wyf quod he lat slepyn andy be styll
It may be wel yet pauenture to day
Ye shal your trouthe holde be my fay
For godi so wisly haue mercy on me
I hadde wel leuer stikidy forto be
For terry loue whiche I to you haue
But ye sholde your trouthe kepe andy saue
Trouthe is the hiest thingy that may may kepe
But with that worde she braste anon to wepe
Andy sayde I you forbede on peyne of deth
That neuer whyle you lastith lyf or breth
To no wight to telle of this mysauenture
As I may best I wol my woo endure
Ne make no contenaunce of heuynes
That folk of you may deme harmy or ges
Andy forth he clepith a squier andy a mayde
Go forth anone with Dorigene he sayde

And leyny her to ſuche a place anone
They tolde her leue and on her Wey they goon
But they ne Wiſte Why ſhe thyder Went
He Wolde no Wight telle his entente
This ſquier Whiche highte Aurilius
On Dorigene that Was amerous
Of auenture happid here to mete
Amyd the tolly right in the quickeſt ſtrete
As ſhe Wold haue gon the Wey forth right
Tolward the gardyn there as ſhe hadde highte
And he Was in to the gardyn Ward alſo
For Wel he ſpyed Whey ſhe Wolde go
Out of her hous to ony maner place
But thus they metyn be auenture and grace
And he ſaluieth her With glad entent
And aſkid of her Whithirward ſhe Went
And ſhe anſWerde half as ſhe Were mad
Unto the gardyn as my huſbond bad
My trouthe forto holde allas allas
Aurilius gan Wonder in this caas
And in his herte hadde gret compaſſion
Of her cheve and of her lamentacion
And of Arueragus the Worthy knyght
That bad her holde that ſhe had highte
So loth hym Was yf ſhe ſholde breke her trouthe
And in his herte he caughte of this gret wolthe
Conſiderynge the beſte on euery ſide
That from that luſt yet Were hym leuer abyde
Than to do ſo high a foliſſh Wrechidnes

Ageyns fraunchecie and gentilnes
For Whiche in felle wordis sayde he thus
Madame say to your lordy Arueragus
That sith y se his grete gentilnes
To you and eke I se your distres
That him were leuer haue a shame & þ were youthe
Thay ye to me this sholde breke your trouthe
I haue wel leuyr auyr to suffre woo
Thay I departe sholde the loue betellin you two
I you relece Madame in to your hondy
Quyt euery suvement and euery bondy
That ye haue made to me as here beforn
Sithyn that tyme that ye were first born
My trouthe y plighe I shal you neuer repreue
Of noon beheste and here I take my leue
As of the trewest and eke the best wyf
That euer yet I knewe in al my lyf
But euery wyf kepaar of her beheste
On Dorigene remembrith atte leste
Thus ony a squier do a gentil dede
As wel as ony a knyghe Withouten drede
She thankith hym vp on her knees bare
And hoom to her husbonde is she fare
And tolde hym al as ye haue herdy me saidy
And be ye siker that he was wel a paidy
That it were impossible me to wryte
What sholde I lenger of this caas endite
Arueragus and Dorigene his wyf
In souereyn blisse ledyn forth her lyf

Neuer aftir was ther angir hem betwene
He cherisshed her though she were a quene
And she was trewe to hym for euermore
Of thyse two folk ye gete of me nomore
Aurilius that his cost hath al forlorne
Curseth the tyme that he was borne
Allas allas quod he that I behight
Of purely gold a thousand pound weyght
Unto this philosopher how shal I do
I se nomore but that I am forlo
Myn heritage I muste nedis selle
And be a beggar here I may not dwelle
And shamyn al my kynrede in this place
But I of hym may gete sum grace
But natheles I wol of hym assay
At certeyn dates and dayes to paye
And thanke hym of his grete curtesie
My trouthe wol I kepe I wil not lye
With herte sore he goth unto his cofyr
And broughte gold unto this philosophir
The value of fyue hundrid pound I gesse
And hym besechith of his gentilnes
To graunte hym dayes of the remenaunt
And sayde maistir I dar wel make auaunt
I faylid neuer of my trouthe as yet
For sikirly my dette shal be quyt
Towardes you how euer that I fare
To go a beggyng in my kirtil bare
But yf ye wolde vouchesauf on suerte

Two yeer or thre to respite me
Than were I wel for ellis mot I selle
My heritage ther is nomore to telle
This philisophre sobirly answerde
And sayde thus what he his wordis herde
Haue y not holde couenaunt vnto the
Yes certis wel and trewly quod he
Hast thou not had thy lady as the liketh
Ho no quod he and sorowfully he siketh
What was the cause tel me yf thou can
Aurilius anone his tale began
And tolde hym al as ye haue herd before
It nedith not to reherce it you nomore
He sayde Arueragus of gentilnes
Hadde leuer to dye in sorwe and in distres
Than that his wyf were of her trouthe fals
The sorwe of Dorigene he tolde hym als
How loth her were to be a wicked wyf
And that she hadde leuer haue lost hir lyf
And her trouthe sche swore thorow Innocence
She neuer erst had herd of apparence
That made me to haue in her so gret pyte
And right as freely as he sent her to me
As freely sent I her hom to hym agayn
This is al and som ther is nomore to seyn
This philisophre answerde leue brother
Euerich of you did gentilnes to other
Thou art a squier and he is a knyght
But god forbede for his blisful myght

But a clerk coude do as gentill a dede
As wel as ony of you it is no drede
Sire I relece thy thousandy pounde
As wolde thou were cropen out of the grounde
Ne neuer or nolde thou haddist knowen me
For sire I wol not take a peny of the
For al my craft ne for [illegible] tmuaylle
Thou hast wel paide for [illegible]
It is ynolde farwel and [illegible] goode day
And took his hors and forth he goeth his way
Lordyngis this question [illegible] I polde
Whiche was the moste fre [illegible]kith yolde
Nolde telliith me er ye furthir wende
I can nomore my tale is at an ende
Here endith the Frankeleyns tale.
Here begynneth the seconde Nonnes prologe.
The mynystre and norisshe of alle vices
Whiche that men clepe in englisch Idelnesse
Whiche that is porter of the yate of delices
To eschuey and by her contrary hem to oppresse
That is to say be leefful besines
Wel ought we to do al our entent
Lest that the fende with Idelnes vs hent.
For he with his thousandy cordis slye
Continually vs waytith to be clappe
Whan he may may in Idelnes aspye
He can so lightely catche hym in his trappe
Til that a may be hent right by the lappe
He nys not waar the fendy hath hym in hondy

Wel ought̃e vs worche ⁊ ydelnes withstond̃
And̃ though men drede neuer forto dye
Yet se men wel le reson doutles
That ydelnesse is hotyn slogardeye
Of whiche ther comyth neuer no good̃ entrees
And̃ syn that slougthe her holdith in a lees
Only forto slepe and̃ ete and̃ drynke
And̃ to deuouryn al that othir swynke
And̃ forto put vs from suche ydelnes
That cause is of so gret confusiõ
I haue here don̄ my feithful lesines
Aftir the legend̃ and̃ translaciõ
Right so thy glorious lyf and̃ passiõ
Thou with thy garlond̃ wrought of rose of lilye
The mone I mayde and̃ martir saint Cecily
And̃ thou that flour art of virgins alle
Of whom̄ that Bernard̃ list so wel to wryte
To the at my firste begynnynge I calle
Thou comfort of vs wrecchis do me endite
Thy maydens deth that whan thou her merite
The eterne lyf thou graunte of the fend̃ victory
As men mowe aftir rede in her story
Thou mayde and̃ moder doughter of thy sone
Thou welle of mercy synful soulis to cure
In whom̄ that god̃ of bounte chaas forto wone
Thou humbil and̃ high ouer euery creature
Thou nobliste so ferforth ouer nature
That no disdeigne thy maker lad̃ of kynde
His sone in blood̃ and̃ flesth to clothe ⁊ wynde

Whiche in the cloiſter of thy bliſſful entrees
Toke mannys ſhapethe the eterne loue & pees
That of thy tryne compas lordy andy gyde is
Whom heuyn andy erthe andy ſe Withoute les
Ay herien andy thou Virgine voutles
Baar of thy body andy dueldiſt maydy pure
The creatour of euery creature
Aſſembliddy is in the magnificence
With mercy goodnes andy ſuche pyte
That thou that art the ſoune of excellence
Not only helpiſt theym that praieth the
But oftyn tyme of thy benignite
Ful frely or that may thyn help ſeche
Thou goſt beforn andy art our ſoulis leche
Wolde help thou bliſſful andy meke fair mayde
Me flemyd Wrecche in this deſert of gaſt
Thinke on the Woman of Canane that ſayde
That Whelpis eten ſom of the crompys ſmall
That from her lordis table ley y falle
Andy though that J vnWorthy ſone of Eue
Be ſynful yet accepte my beleue
Andy for that feith is ded Withoute Werkis
So forto Werkyn yeue me Witte andy ſpace
That J be quyt from thens that moſt derk is
O thou that art ſo fair andy ful of grace
Be myn aduocate in that high place
There as Withouten ende is ſunge Oſanne
Thou criſtis moder doughter dere of anne
Andy of thy light my ſoule in priſon light

That troublidy is le the cogitacion
Of my body andy also le the wight
Of erthly luſt andy fals affection
O hauyn of refut o ſaluacion
Of hem that leey in ſorwe andy diſtreſſe
Wolde help ſorto my work J wol me dreſſe
Yet y pray you that redyn that J wryte
For yef me that J do no diligence
This ilke ſtory lefily to endite
For bothe haue J the wordis andy the ſentence
Of hym that atte ſeyntis reuerence
The ſtory wroot andy folowedy her legende
As ferforth as godi wyl me grace ſende
Firſt wolde J yolde the name of ſaint Cecily
Expoune as mey may in her ſtory ſe
Jt is to ſay in engliſſh heuenys kylye
For pure chaſtnes of virginite
Or for the witnes hadde of honeſte
Andy grene of conſcience andy of godi fame
The ſwete ſauour lily was her name
Or Cecily is to ſay the wey to blynde
For the enſaumpil was le goody techinge
Or ellis Cecily as J writyn fynde
Js ioyned le a maner commynge
Of heuyn andy lya in her inſiguryngе
The heuyn is ſet for thought of holynes
Andy lya for her laſtinge befines
Cecily may eek le ſaidy in this manere
Wantyngy of blyndnes for her gret light

Of ſapience and for her thewis clere
Or elles lo thys maydens name beighe
Of heuyn and leos compth of whiche be right
Men mighte her wel the heuyn of pepil calle
Enſample of good & thyſe workis with alle
For leos pepil in engliſſh is forto ſay
And right as men may in the heuyn ſe
The ſonne and mone and ſterris euery way
Right ſo men goſtly in thys maydyn ſee
Stabyn of feith the grete magnanimite
And eek the clerenes hool of ſapience
And ſondry werkis bright of excellence
And right ſo as thyſe philoſophris wryte
That heuyn is ſwift & wundy & eke bremynge
Right ſo was faire Cecily the whyte
Ful ſwift and beſy in euery good werkynge
And wunde and hool in good pſeuerynge
And bremynge euer in charite ful bright
Now haue I declared you what she highte
Here endith the Second Nonnys prologh.
And here begynneth the tale.
This maiden bright Cecili as her legende ſaith
Was comyn of Romayns of nobil kynde
And from her cradil vp foſtrid in the faith
Of crist and baar his goſpel in mynde
She neuer ceſed as I write fynde
Of her praiere and god to loue and drede
Beſeking hym to kepe her maydenhede
And whan this mayde ſholde vnto a man

Tecidis he that was ful of yongh age
Whiche that y clepid was Valerian
And day was come of her mariage
She ful deuout and humbil in her corage
Vnder her Role of goldh that sat ful feire
Hade next her flesshh I cladh her in ay heire
And whyle that the Organs made melodh
To godh aboue thus in her herte songh she
O lordh my bodh and eek my soule gh
Vnbemmydh lest I confoundidh be
And foh his loue that bh on the tre
Euery seconde and thridde day she fast
Ay biddynge in her orisons ful fast
The nyght cam and to bedde must she goon
With her husbonde as it was the maner
And prively she sayde to hym anoon
O swete and welbelouydh spouse dere
Ther is a counsel and ye wol it here
Whiche that right fayn I wolde to you seye
So that ye swere ye wil it not bewrey
Valerian gan faste to her swere
That foh no maas ne thingh that might be
He sholde neuer to none bewreyen her
And than at erst to hym sayde she
I haue an aungel whiche that louyth me
That with gret loue wher so I wake or slepe
Is redy ay my bodh forto kepe
And yf that he may feley out of drede
That ye me touche or loue in vilony

He right anon wil ſle you with the dede
And in your youthe thus ſhul ye dy
And yf that ye in clene lif me gy
He wol you loue as me for your clennes
And ſhewe to you his ioye and his brightnes
Thus Valerian corrected as good wolde
Anſwerde agayn yf J ſhal triſte the
Lete me that aungel ſe and hym beholde
And yf that it a very aungel be
Than wol J do as thou haſt praid me
And yf thou loue another man for ſoth
Right with this ſwerd than wol J ſle you both
Cecily anſwerde anon right in this wyſe
Yef that you liſt anon right the aungel ſhul ye ſe
So that ye trowe on crift and you baptiſe
Goth forth to via appia quod ſhe
That from this town ſtondith but myles thre
And to the poure folkis that there duellyn
Sey hem right thus as J ſhal you tellyn
Tel hem that J Cecili you to hem ſent
To ſhewen you good vrban the olde
For ſecretnes and for good entent
And when that ye ſaint vrban haue beholde
Telle hym the wordis whiche that J to you tolde
And when that he hath purgid you from ſynne
Than ſhal ye ſe that aungel or ye twynne
This Valerian is in to the place good
And right as he was taught be her lernynge
He fond this holy man vrban anon

Among the saintis bericle lokynge
And he anon Without tarynge
Dide his message and What that [illegible] bolde
Wepyng for ioye gan his hondis vphold
The teris from his yen let he falle
Almyghty lord O Jhesu crist quod he
Sower of chastite counsellour of [illegible]te
The fruyt of that seed of chastite
That thou hast sowe in Cecily take to the
Lo lik a busy bee Without yn gyle
Thy seruaunt ay thyn owen thral Cecile
For that spouse that she took but nelde
Ful lik a fers lioun she sendith here
As meke as euer Was ony lamb to elde
And With that Word anon ther gan apere
An old man yclothid in White clothis clere
That hadde a book With letir of gold in honde
And gan before Valerian forto stonde
Valerian as ded fyl doun for drede
What he this old man salde standing so
Whiche forth With anone he herd hym rede
O lorde of alle o feith o god Without mo
O cristendome and fadir of al also
Abouyn al and ouyr al euery Where
Thyse Wordis al With gold Writen Were
When this Was red they said this olde man
Laryst thou this thing or no say ye or nay
I leue al thing quod Valerian
For sother thinge thay this I dar Wel say

Vnder heuyn no wight thinke may
Tho tarryssheth this olde may he ne wiste where
And pope Vrban hym cristeneth right dere
Valerian goeth hom and fyndeth Cecily
With ynne his chambir with an angel stondy
This aungel hadde of Rosis and of lily
Crownys two the wh[illegible] he bare in hondy
And first to Cecily as I vnderstondy
He yaf that on and thus gan he take
That other to Valerian her make
With body cleen and vnwemmyd thought
Kepith ay weel this crownys quod he
Fro paradyse to you hem haue I brought
Ne neuer mo shal they wlen be
Ne lese her sote sauyr trustith me
Ne neuer wight ne shal se hem with ye
But he be chast and hate velony
And thou Valerian for thou so sone
Assentist to goddis counsel also
Say what thou list and thou shalt haue thy bone
I haue a brothir quod Valerian tho
That in this worlde I loue no man so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouthe as I do in this place
The aungel sayde godn likith thy requeste
And bothe with the palme of matirdoue
Ye shul come in to his blisful feste
And with that word Tiburce his brother com
And whan that he the sauour vndernom

Whiche that Roſis and the lilyes caſte
He ſpak vnto his brother in gret haſte
And ſayde I wonder this tyme of the yeer
Whens that this ſwete ſauour comyth ſo
Of Roſis and of lilyes that y ſmelle here
For thogh y hadde hem in my hondis tvo
The ſauour myghte in me no depper go
The ſwete ſauour that in my herte I fynde
Hath chaungid me al in another kynde
Valerian ſayde tvo crounys haue wee
Snolb whit and Roſe redy that ſhyneth clere
Whiche that thyn yen haue no myght to ſee
And as thou ſmelliſt thourogh my prayer
So ſhalt thou ſe hem leue brother dere
If it ſo be thou wilt withouten ſlouthe
Beleue a right and knolbe verry trouthe
Tiburce anſwerde ſaiſt thou this to me
In ſothnes or in deeme I herkyn this
In deemys quod Valerian haue we be
Vnto this tyme brother myn yvis
But nolb at erſt our duellyng in trouthe is
Holb wotiſt thou this qdy Tiburce e in what wyſe
Quod Valerian that ſhal I the deuyſe
The aungel of gody hath me the trouthe I taught
Whiche thou ſhalt ſe yf thou wilt veneye
The ydollis and be clene and ellis nought
And of the miraklyl of thyſe crounys tveye
Seynt Ambroſe in his preſas liſt forto ſeye
Solempuli this nobil doctour dere

Comendith and ſaith in this manere
The palm of martirdom ſorto receyue
Seynt Cecile fulfilled of goddis yefte
The worlde and eek her chambir gan ſhe weyue
Witnes Cecily and Tiburces ſhrifte
To whiche god of his bounte wolde ſhifte
Crownys two of flouris ſwete ſmellynge
And his aungel hem the crownys bryngge
The mayde hath brought hem to blis aboue
The worlde hath wist that it is worthy certeyn
Deuocion and chaſtite wel ſorto loue
Tho ſhewde hym Cecily al opey and pleyn
That alle ydols been but a thing in feyn
For they be domb and therto they be deef
And chargedy hym his ydolis ſorto leef
Who ſo that trowbeth nat this a beſt he is
Quod tho Tiburce yf I ſhal not lye
And ſhe gan kiſſe his breſt that herde this
And was ful glady he couthe trouthe aſpye
This day I take the for myn alye
Saidy this bliſſedy faire maydey dere
And after that ſhe sayde as ye molde here
Lo right ſo as the loue of crist quod ſhe
Made me thy brotheris wyf right in this wyſe
Anoy for myn alye here take I the
Syn that thou wilt thyn ydols diſpiſe
Go with thy brother nolb and the baptiſe
And make the cleen ſo that thou may beholde
That angelis face whiche thy brothir of tolde

Tiburce answerde and sayde brother dere
First tel me whether I shal and to what may
To whom qd he com forth with right good chere
I wyl the lede vnto the pope Vrban
To Vrban brother myn quod Valerian
Quod tho Tiburce wolt thou me thider lede
Me thinketh that it were a wonder drede
Me mene ye not Vrban quod he tho
That is so ofte dampned to be ded
And woneth in hallwis alwey to and fro
And dar not onys put forth his hed
Men sholde hym brenne in a fire so reed
Yf he were founde yf men mighte hym aspye
And we also to bere hym companye
And whyle we sekyn that diuinite
That is hid in heuene priuely
Algate brent in this worlde shal we be
To whom Cecily answerde boldly
Men mighte drede wel and skilfully
This lif to like myn owen dere brother
If this were liuynge only and non other
But there is bettir lif in other place
That neuer shal beloste ne drede the nought
Whiche goddis sone vs tolde thorowh his grace
That fadris sone hath al thing wrought
And al that wrought is with a skilful thought
The goste that from the fader gan procede
Hath soulidy hym withouten ony drede
By worde and by miraclil lo goddis son

Wham he was in this worlde declaredy here
That ther is other lyf there men may wody
To whom answerde Tiburce o suster dere
Me seydist thou right now in this manere
Ther nas but o gody lordy in soothfastnes
Andy now of there hold maist thou bere witnes
That shal I telle quod she or that I go
Right as a may hath sapiences thre
Memorye engery andy intellect also
So in suche beynge of dyuinyte
Thre ysones may ther right wel be
Tho gan she there ful bisily hym preche
Of cristis soy andy of his peynes teche
Andy many poyntis of his passioy
Holde goddis sone in this worlde was withholde
To do manlynde pleyn remissioy
That hey bounde in symys andy arris colde
Alle thyse thingis she vnto Tiburce tolde
Andy aftir this Tiburce in goody entent
With Valerian to pope Vrban went
That thankidy gody & with glady herte & light
He cristnedy hym andy made hym in that place
Parfit in his lernyngy goddis knyght
Andy aftir this Tiburce gat suche grace
That euery day he sawe in tyme andy space
The aungel of gody andy euery maner bone
That he gody axidy it was spedy ful sone
Yt were ful hardy be ordre forto seyn
Holde many wondris Jhesus for hym wrought

But atte laste to telle short and pleyn
The sergeauntis of the toun hem sought
And hem before almache the Preset brought
Whiche hem apposid and knewe al her entent
And to the ymage of Jubiter hem sent
And sayde Who so wil do no sacrifise
Shap of his hedy this is my sentence here
Anone thyse martirs that I you deuyse
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the Prefectis and his Counselere
Hem hent and the sayntis forthledde
Hym self he wepte for pyte that he hadde
Whey Maximus hady herdy the sayntis lore
He gat hym of the turmentours leue
And hadde hem to his hous withouten more
And with her prechinge or it were eue
They gomme fro the turmentours forto reue
And fro Maxime and fro his folk echone
The fals feith to trowe in gody allone
Cecily amy whey it was woxe nyght
With preestis that hem cristneden alle in fere
And afterwardy whan day was woxen light
Cecily sayde hem with a ful stedfast chere
Now cristis olbey knyghtis leef and dere
Cast al albey the workis of derkenesse
And arme you with armys of knighteneſſe
Ye haue forsoth yday a gret bataylle
Your cours is doon your feith hath you conserued
Goth to the croune of lif that may not faylle

The rightful Juge Whiche ye haue seruyd
Shal yeue it you as ye haue it deseruyd
And Whan this thing was sayd as I deuyse
They ledde hem forth to do sacrifyse
But Whey they were to the place I brought
To telley shortly the conclusion
They nolde exercise ne sacrifyse right nought
But on here knees settey hem a doun
With humbil herte and sadv deuocioun
And lostey bothe her heddis in the place
Her soulis Werte to the kyngv of grace
This Maximus that salv this thing betyde
With pitous teris tolde it anon right
That he her soulis salv to heuyn glide
With aungelis ful of cleernes and light
And With his Wordv conuertid many a Wight
For Whiche almachius didv hym so to bete
With Whippis of ledv til he is lif gan lete
Cecily hym took and buriedv hym anon
By tiburce and Valerian sothly
With yme her burvynge place vnder the stoon
And aftir this Almachius hastely
Badv his mynistris seachyn openly
Cecily so that she mighte in his presence
Do sacrifyse and Jubiter exercise
But they conuertid at her Wyse lore
Weptyn ful sore and yaf ful credence
Vnto her Worde and cxdeu more and more
Crist goddis sone Whiche Without difference

Is trwe god this is our sentence
That hath a seruaunt so good hym to serue
This with o loys he wolde though he sterue
Almachius that herde of this dynge
Bad feche Cecily that he might her se
And alder first this was his axinge
What maner womay art thou quod he
I am a gentilwoman boxn quod she
Are the quod he though it the greue
Of thy religion and of thy beleue
Why than began ye your question folily
Quod she that wolde two answers conclude
In o demaunde ye axid lewdly
Almache answerde to that similitude
Of whens comyth thyn answer so rude
Of whens quod she why that she was freyned
Of conscience and of good feith vnfeyned
Almachius sayde ne takist thou no hede
Of my power and she answerd hym this
Your myght quod she is ful litil to drede
For euery mortal mannys power nys
But lik a bladder ful of wynd y wis
For with a nedelis poynt when it is blowe
May al the boste of it be lend ful lowe
Ful wrongfully began thou quod he
And in wrong is yet al thy perseueraunce
Wost thou nat how our princis mighty & fre
Haue thus comaundid and made ordenaunce
That euery cristyn wight shal haue penaunce

But yf that he his cristendom wyth seye
And goy al quyt yf he wol it reneye
Your Prynces every as your noblesse doth
Quod tho Cecile in a wondy sentence
Ye make vs gilty and it is not soth
For ye that knowen wel our Innocence
For as muche as we do ay reuerence
To crist and for we bere a cristyn name
Ye put vs in cryme and eke in blame
But we that knowen that name so
For vertuous we may it nat withseye
Almache answerde cheest on of thyse two
Do sacrifise or cristendom reneye
That thou mowe ascape as y the seye
At whiche worde this holy blissful mayde
Gan forto laughe and to the Juge sayde
O Juge confused in thy nycete
Wolt thou that y reneye Inn^ocence
To make me a wicked wight quod she
Lo he dissimulleth here in audience
He stareth and wodeth in his aduertence
To whom almache sayde o sely wreche
Ne wotist thou not how fer my might may streche
Haue not our mighty Prynces yeuen
To me bothe power and auctorite
To make folk bothe dyen and lyuyn
Why spekist thou than so proudly to me
I speke not but stedfastly quod she
Not proudly for y sey as for my side

We hatyn dedly that vice of pryde
And yf thou drede not as soth forto here
Thy wol y shew al openly be right
Thou that hast maad a ful gret lesynge here
Thou saist thy Princes haue yeue the might
Gothe forto slee and forto quyken a wight
That thou maist but only lif bereue
Thou hast noon other poure ne non leue
But thou maist say thy Princis haue the maistry
Ministre of deth for yf thou spekest yf mo
Thou liest for thy poure is ful nakidy
Do wey thy boldnes saidy Almache tho
And do sacrifise to our goddis or you go
I recke not what wrongy thou me profre
For I ony suffre as ony a philisofre
But that wrongis may I not endure
That thou spekist of our goddis here quod he
O Cealy answerve O nyce creature
Thou saidist no wordy sithnes thou spakist to me
That I ne knelde therwith thyn nyece
And that thou were in euery maner wyse
A leldy Officer and a leyn Justyse
Ther lackith no thingy of thyn witer yey
But thou art blyndy for thingy that we se al
That is a stony that molde men wel aspiey
That ilke stony a gody thou wolt it callyn
I rede the leet thyn hondy vpon it fallyn
And taste it wel a stony thou shalt it fynde
Syn that thou seest not with thyn yey blynde

It is a shame that the pepyl shal
So sterne and lawghe at thy folye
For comynly men woot it wel ouer al
That mighty godys in his heuenys hye
And thyse ymagis wel thou maist aspye
To the ne to hem self may do no profit
For in effect they be not worth a myte
This and suche other sayde she
And he was woth & lady men sholde her lede
Hom vntil her hous and in her hous qd he
Grey her in a bath of flamys rede
And as he lady right so was it do in dede
For in a bath they gomme her faste shittyn
And nyght and day fyre they vnder bettyn
The longe nyght and eke the day also
For al the fyre and eek the grete hete
She sat al colde and felid no woo
It made her not a drope forto swete
But in that bath her lif she moot lete
For almachyns with a ful wicktid entent
To sle her in the bath his sonde to her sent
Thre strokis in the necke he smoot here tho
The turmentour but for no maner charme
He mighte not smyte her necke atwo
And for ther was that tyme an ordenaunce
That noman sholde do to no pisone suche penaunce
The fourthe strook to smyten softe or sore
This turmentour durste do no more
But half dede with her necke corupyn there

He lefte her ly and on his Wey is Went
The cristen folk Whiche that aboute her Were
With shetis haue the bloody vp hent
Thre dayes leuyd she in this turment
And neuer ceside hem the feith to teche
That she had fostrid hem she gan to preche
And there she yaf her meuables and her thinge
And to Pope Vrban betook hem tho
And sayde I asside this of heuene kyng
To haue respit thre dayes and no mo
To persourme that I before haue do
Thyse soulis and that I may do Wirche
Here of my hous perpetuelly a chirche
Saint Vrban With his deliens priuely
The body fet and biried it be nyght
Among his other sayntis honestly
Her hous the chirche of saint Cecily highte
Seynt Vrban halowed it as he Wel myght
In Whiche in to this day in nobil Wyse
Men do to crist and to his seyntis seruise
Here endith the Seconde Nonnes tale. And
Begynneth the proleg of the chanons yeman.
WHen tolde Was the lyf of saint Cecile
Or We hadde riden fully .v. myle
At boughtey vnder ble vp gan a take
A man that clothid Was in clothis blake
And vnderneth he Waar a Whyte surplice
His hakney Whiche Was of pomel gryce
So Watte he that Wonder Was to se

It semyd that he hadde prykid myles thre
Aboute the peytrel stoody the some ful hye
He was of some as flecked as a pye
The hakeney eek that his yeman rood vpon
So watte that vnnethis myghte it goon
A male twifolde vp on his croppyn lay
It semyd that he caried litil aray
At ligħt for somer rood this worthy man
And in myn herte I wonder began
What that he was til that I vnderstood
How that his cloke was folded to his hood
For which whan I hadde longe auysid me
I demyd hym sum chanon forto be
His hat hing at his bak doun by a lace
For he hadde riden more than trot or pace
He rood ay prikynge as he were wood
A clote leef he hadde leyd vnder his hood
For shoot and forto kepe his hed fro hete
But it was ioye for to se hym swete
His forhed droppid as a stillatory
Were ful of plantey or of pelitory
And whan he was come he gan crye
God saue quod he this ioly companye
To riden in this mery companye
His yeman was eek ful of curtesie
Faste haue I prykid qd he for your sake
Be cause that I wold you ouer take
And sayde sires now in the morow tyde
Out of your hosterye I sawe you ryde

And warnedy here my lordy and souereyn
Whiche that to ridery with you is ful feyn
For his disport he louith dalliaunce
Fand for thy warnynge god yeue ỹ good chaunce
Thay sayde our oste certeyn it wolde seme
Thy lordy were wyse and y so y may wel deme
He is ful iocunde also dar y ley
Can he ought telle a merry tale or elley
With whiche he gladde may this company
Who sir my lordy ye sir without ey ly
He can of mirthe and eke of iolite
Nat but ynow also sire trustith me
And ye hym knew as wel as do I
Ye wolde wondre how wel and craftely
He coude worke and that in sondry wyse
He hath taken on hym many a grete empryse
Whiche were ful hardy for ony that is here
To bringe aboute but they of hym lere
As homely as he ridith amongis yow
Yf ye hym knew it wolde be for your prow
Ye wolde not forgoy his aqueyntaunce
For michil goody I dar ley in balaunce
Al that I haue in my possessiõ
He is a may of hye discrecõ
I warne you he is a passyng wyse may
Wel quod our hoste tel me yf thou may
Is he a clerk or none tel me what he is
A clerk nay nay he is gretter than a clerk ywis
Sayde this yemay and in wordis felle

Oste-andy of his craft som what wol I shewe
Sire my lorde ony suche a subtilte
That al his craft ye may not wite of me
For al the grounde to Caunterbury toun
He coude alle clene turne vp so doun
And pave it al with silver and with golde
And when this yeman hath thus tolde
Unto our oste he sayde benedicite
This thinge is wonder meruayles to me
Syn that thy lorde is of so high prudence
Be cause of whiche sholde men hym reuerence
That of his worship reckith he so lyte
His ouerist sloppe is not worth a myte
As in effect to hym so moot I go
It is al baudy and to tore also
Why is thy lorde so sluttysh I the pray
And of poure is bettir cloth to bey
Yf that his dede acorde with his spechе
Tel me and that I the beseche
Why quod this yeman wherto axe ye of me
God helpe me so for he shal neuer the
But I wol nat auowe that I sey
And therfore kepe it secret I you prey
He is to wyse in feith as I beleue
That is ouer do it wol neuer preue
And right as clerkis sayn it is a vice
Wherfore in that I holde hym lewde and nyce
For whan a man hath ouer gret a wytte
Ful ofte it happith hym to mys vse it

So with my lordy andy that me greuith sore
Body it amende I can say nomore
Therof no force goody yeman quod our ost
Syn of the kommyng of thy lordy thou host
Tel how he doth tel on nold hardely
Syn that he is so crafty andy so sly
Where duelle ye yf it be to telle tel me
In the subburbis of a toun quod he
Lurkinge in hernys andy in lanys blynde
Where as thyse robbers & thyse theuys bekynde
Holden her feresul priuy residence
As they that dar not shewe her presence
So fare we yf we shal say the sothe
Nold quod our ost lete me talke tothe
Why art thou so discolouryd in thy face
Petir quod he godys yeue it hardy grace
I am so vsidy the hote fire to blowe
That it hath chaungidy-my colour I trowe
I am not wont in no myrour to prye
But swynke sore andy lerne multiplye
We bloundryn euer andy powdryn in the fyre
Andy for al that we fayley of our desire
For euer we lacke our conclusion
To muchel folk we do illusion
Andy hewyn goldy be it a pound or two
Or ten or twelue or many sommys mo
Andy make hem wone atte leste wey
That of a pounde we coude make twey
It is fals and ay we haue goody hope

It sorto do and of a thyng it be groped
And this science is so fer vs before
We molde it not lerne though we hadde it sworn
To ouer take it. it slit alwey so faste
It wol vs make beggars atte laste
Whyle this yeman was thus in his talkynge
This chanon dede hym nere & herde al thynge
Whiche this yeman spak for suspecion
Of mennys speche euer had this chanon
For Catoun saith he that gilty is
Demyth al thinge to be spoke of hym ywis
That was the cause he gan so nygh drawe
To this yeman to herkyn al his sawe
And thus he sayde to his yoman tho
Holde thou thy pees and speke wordis no mo
For yf thou do thou shalt it dere abye
Thou shalt a waymentist me here in this compayne
And eke discouerist that thou sholdest hyde
Ye quod our ost tel on what so betyde
Of al his threteynge recke thou not a myte
In feith quod he no more I do but a lyte
And whan this chanon sawe it wold nat be
But that his yeman wolde telle his priuyte
He fledde away for verry sorow and shame
A ha quod the yeman here shal ryse a game
For it is erneste to me be my feith
That fele y wel what that ony man saith
And yet for al my smert and al my greef
For al my sorow labour and myschef

I coude neuer leue it in no wyse
Nolh wolde to gody my wit wolde suffise
To tellyn al that longeth to that art
But natheles you wol I telle a part
Syn that my lordy is goon I wol not spare
Suche thingy as I knowe I wol declare
Here endith the prology Andy begynneth
the tale of the Chanons yemay.

Wyth this Chanon I dwellid. xij. yere
Andy of his science am I neuer the neer
That I hadde I haue lost ther by
Andy gody woot so haue mo thay I
Thre as I was wont to be right fresh & gay
Of clothinge andy of other goody aray
Nolh may I were any hose vp on myn hedy
Andy there my colour was bothe fressh & reedy
Nolh it is way andy of a ledyn hewe
Who so it wisth fore shal he rewe
Andy of my shynk y blent is myn ye
To suche auauntage it is to multiplye
That slidynge science hath made me so bare
That I haue no goody where that euer I fare
Andy yet I am endettidy so fore ther by
Of goldy that I borowedy euerdy
That whyle I lyue I shal it quyte neuer
Let euery may be war by me for euye
What maner may that casteth hym therto
If he continue I holde his thryfte y do
For helpe me godi ther by shal he not thryue

But expire his pure & make his Wittis thynne
And Whan he thorow his madnes and folye
Hath lost his owen goody thorou Jeparde
Than he enuitith other folke therto
To lese her goody as he hym self hath do
For vnto shrewis ioye it is and ese
To haue her felowis in peyne and diseese
For thus Was Jonys lernyd of a clerk
Of that no charge J Wol speke of our Werk
Wher We be there as We shal exercise
Our elvysh craft We semyn Wonder Wyse
Our termys been so clergial and queynte
J blowe the fire til my herte queynte
What sholde J telle eche proporcion
Of thingis Whiche We Werkyn vp and down
As oyn. B. or. Sj. vncis may Wel be
Of siluer or sum other quantite
And lesy me to telle you the namys
Of orpement hrent bonys Jren squamys
That in to powder grounde be ful smal
And in ay erthyn pot hold put is al
And salt petir and also papre
Beforne thyse powdris that J speke of here
And Wel y couerid With a lampe of glas
And of muche other thing Whiche þ there Was
And of the pottis and glassis enlutynge
That of the eyr mizhte passe out no thing
And of the fyre esy and smert also
Whiche that Was maad & of the aire & Woo

That he hadde in our matier sublymynge
And in a malgamynge and Calcynynge
Of quiksilver I clepid mercury crude
For alle our slyghtis we can not conclude
Our orpyment and sublymyd mercury
Our grounden litarge eke on the persary
Of eche of theym of vnces a certeyn
Not helpith vs our labour is in veyn
And eek our spiritis assensioun
Ne our maters that liyn al fix adoun
Nolde vs in our Worchynge onys auayle
For lost is al our labour and trauayle
And the coste a twenty deuyl wey
Is lost Whiche we on it leye
Ther is also ful many another thing
That is to our craft appertaynyng
Though I he ordre hem reherce ne can
As hool Armoniak Verdegrece boras
And sondry vessellis made of erthe & glas
Our vrynalis and oure descensories
Violis crossolettis and sublimatories
Tuwelis and Alembikis eke
And other suche dere ynow a leek
Not nedith it to reherce hem alle
Watirs rubyfying and loves galle
Arsenyk sal Armoniak and brymstone
And erbis eek coude I telle many on
As Egremoigne valerian and lunarye
And other suche yf me list to tarye

Our lampes brennyng nyght and day
To bryngе aboute our craft yf we may
Our furneys eek of alcynacion
And of watirs albificacion
Vnsleckid lyme chalk gleir of ay ey
Coldeis dyuers asshis dongh pis and cley
Serid potis salt petir vitriole
And dyuers fyris made of wode and cole
Sal tartir alcoly and sal preparat
And combust maters and coagulat
Cley maad with hors donge or mānys her or oyle
Of tartre alym glas berme wort and argule
Rosealgar and other maters embibynge
And eke of our matirs encorporynge
And of our siluer cytrinacion
Our sementynge and also fermentacion
Our Jngottis testes and many mo
I wol yow telle as me was taught also
The .iiij. spiritis and the bodyes .vij.
Be ordir as y herde my lordy neueyn
The firste spirit quicsiluer clepid is
The seconde orpment the thridde ys bis
Sal armomak and the fourthe brymstone
The bodyes seuyn loke hem here anon
Sol goldy is and luna siluer we threpe
Mars Jren Mercury quicsiluer we clepe
Saturnus ledy and Jubiter is tyn
And venus copir be my fadir kyn
This cursid craft who wol exercise

Ho ſhal no goody haue that he may ſuffiſe
For al the goody he ſpendith ther aboute
He leſe ſhal therof haue I no doute
Who ſo that liſtith bere his folye
Let hym com forth and lerne to multiplye
And euery man that hath aught in his cofre
Let hym apere and beye a phillofre
Preſt or Chanon or ony other wighe
Though he ſitte at his book day and nyghe
In lernynge of this eluyſſhe nyce lore
All is in leyn and parde mochel more
Is to lerne alebdy may this ſubtilte
Fy ſpek not ther of it bol not be
And eny he lettraure or eny he none
As in effect he ſhal fynde it allone
For bothe elbo be my ſauacion
Concludyn in multiplicacion
Al liche weel whyn they haue al y do
This is to ſeyn they fayley bothe elbo
Yet forgat I to make reherſayll
Of watris corroſiff and of lymayll
And of bodijs mollifiacion
And alſo of her induracion
Oylis ablaciones metayll fuſibill
To telle you al it bold paſſe ony bibyl
That oldbere is therfore as for the beſt
Of thyſe namys nold bol I me reſt
For as I trolbe I haue told y nolbe
To reyſe a fynde al loke he neuer ſo bolbe

A nay let be the philosophris stoon
Elyxer we clepyn we selvyn fast echon
For hadde we hym than were we fikir Inowe
But vnto goon of heuyn I make avowe
For al our craft when we haue al y do
And al our sleyghte he wol not come vs to
He hath maad vs spende muche goon
For sorow therof almost we weyen woon
But that goon hope crepith in our herte
Supposing euer though we sore smerte
To be releuyd by hym afterwarde
Suche supposinge I hope is hardy
I warne you weel it is to selden eyr
That future temps hath made me disseyr
In trust wher of al that euer they hadde
Yet of that art they komme not weye sadd
For vnto hem it is a bittir swete
So semyth it for ne had they but a shete
Whiche that myghte wrappyn hem ynne a myght
And a beate to walkyn ynne be day light
They wolde it selle and spende it in this craft
They can not stynte til nothing belaft
And euermore where eyr that they goon
Men may hem kenne be smel of brymstoon
For al the worlde they stynkyn as a goot
Her sauour is so rammyssh and so hoot
That though a man a myle from hem be
The sauour wol infecte hem trustith me
Lo thus by smellyng and thredbare array

If that men list thyse folk knowe they may
And yf a man wol aye hem priuely
Why they be clothid so vnthriftely
Right anon they wol wume in his ere
And sayen yf that they aspyed were
Men wolde hem sle be cause of her science
Lo thus this folk betrayen Innocence
Pas ouer this I go my tale vnto
Er that the pot be dyn the fyre ydo
And metall is a certeyn quantite
My lordy hem temprith and no may but he
Wold is he goon I dar sey boldely
For as men say he can do craftely
Algate I woot wel he hath suche a name
And yet ful ofte he rempth in the blame
And whyte ye wold ful ofte it fareth so
The pot to breketh and farwel al is do
The metall is keen of so greet violence
Our wall is nolde not make hem resistence
But yf they were wrought of lym and stoon
They persyn so and thorwh the wal they goon
And some of hem synke doun in to the grounde
Thus haue we lost ketyme many a pounde
And some ar skaterid al the floor aboute
Some leppyn into the fire withouten doute
Thogh p the fendy in our sighte him not shewe
I trowe that he with vs be that ilke shrewe
In helle where he is lordy and sire
Ne is ther more wo rancour ne Ire

Whan that our pot is broken as I haue saide
Euery man chit and holdeth hym ay wel apaide
Some saide it was of the fyre making
Some sayde nay it was of the blowynge
Than was y ferd for that was myn office
Straw quod he ye be lewd and nyce
It was not tempred as it ought to be
Nay qd the fourthe stynt and herkeneth me
Be cause our fyre was nat made of fethe
That is the cause and other none sitheth
I can telle where on it was a longe
But wel I woot gret strif is ther among
What quod my lord ther is nomore to doon
Of these pavellis I wil be waar eftsoon
I am right siker that the pot was crased
Be as be may be ye not amased
Als vsage is leet swepe the floor swithe
Pluk vp your hertis and be glad and blithe
The mullok on an hep schepid was
And on the floor cast a Canuas
And al the mullok in a side y throwe
And sifted and piked many a throwe
Parde quod on sumwhat of our metal
Yet is there though we haue not al
And though this thinge mischapped hath as nowe
Another tyme it may be wel ynowe
We put our goodes in auenture
A marchaunt parde may not alwey endure
Trist me wel in his prosperite

Sometyme his godis ley drenchidy in the se
And sometyme it comyth saiff vnto londe
Yes quod my lordy the next tyme J wyl fonde
To leynge our craft al in another plyte
And but J do sirs let me haue the wyte
Ther was a defaute in som what wel J woot
Another sayde the fyre was ouyr hoot
But be it hoot or colde J dar say this
That we concludey euer more amys
We fayley alway of that woldyy haue
And in our madnes euer more we raue
And whan we be to gedir euerichone
Euery may semyth as wyse as Salamon
But althing whiche that shyneth as goldy
It is no goldy as J haue here toldy
Ne euery appyl that is fair at ye
Nys not goody what so euer men eye
Right so it farith amongis vs
He that semyth wisest be wote Jesus
Is most fool when it comyth to the preef
And he that semyth trewist is a theef
That shal ye knowe or that J from you wende
Be that my tale be toldy vnto ay ende
Ther is a chauon of Religion
Amongis vs wolde enfect al a toun
Though it were as gret as was nynyue
Rome Alisaunder Troye or other thre
His sleyghtis andy his infinit falsnes
Ne coude nomay writey as J ges

Thogh that he myghte lyue a thousandy yere
In al the Worlde of falsnes nys his pere
For in his termys he Wil hym so Wynde
And spelle his Wordis so sklily and so kynde
Whan he comeyn shal With ony Wight
That he Wol make hym dote anon right
But it a fendy be as hym self is
Ful many a man hath he begiliby er this
And Wol yf he lyue may a Whyle
And yet mey ryde and goon mony a myle
Hym forto selle and haue his aqueyntaunce
Not knoWynge of his fals gouernaunce
And yef you list to yeue me audience
I Wil it telle here in your presence
But Worshipful chanons religious
Ne demyth not that I slaundir your hous
Al though my tale of a Chanoy be
Of euery ordez suny shrewe is parde
As ody forbede that al a Companye
Shulde vewe a singuler mannys folie
To sklaunder you is no thingy myn entent
But to correcte is that I ment
This tale Was not only tolby for you
But eek for othir mo I Wot Wel how
But among cristis apostlis twelue
Ther Was no traitour but Judas hym selue
Thay Why shulde the remenant haue a blame
That giltlees Were be you I say the same
Saue only this yf ye Wol herkyn me

If ony Judas in your couent be
Remeuyth hym betymes I you rede
Of shame or los causyn ony dede
And be no thing displesid I you pray
But in this cas herkyn what I say
IN london was a preest annueler
That there ymme hadde duelt many a yeer
Whiche was so plesaunt and so seruisable
Vnto the wyf where as he was at table
That she wolde suffre hym no thing to pay
For bord ne clothing wente he neuer so gay
And spending siluer hadde he right ynow
Wherof no force I wol procede as now
And telle my tale forth of the chanon
That broughte this preest to confusion
This fals Chanon cam vp on a day
Vnto the prestis chambir where he lay
Beseching hym to lene hym a certeyne
Of gold and he wolde quyte hym ageyn
Lene me a mark quod he but dayes three
At my day I wyl saune saple quyte it the
And yf so be thou fynde me theme fals
Another day hange me by the hals
This preest hym took a mark and þ as blithe
And this chanon hym thankid ofte sithe
And took his leue and went forth his wey
And atte thridde day broughte his money
And to this preest he took this gold ageyn
Wherof this preest was wonder glad & fayn

Certis quod he nothing amendeth me
To lene a man ay more or lesse or thre
Or what thinge were in my possessione
Whan he is so trelle of condicione
That in no wyse he lacke wol his day
To suche a man I ony not say nay
What quod this chanon sholde I be sorwefull
May that were a thinge sullen of nell
Trewthe is a thinge that I wol euer kepe
In to that day in whiche I shal crepe
In to my graue or ellis crist forbede
Beleuyth this as sikir as the crede
Gode I thanke and in goode tyme be it saide
That ther nas neuer man yet euyl payde
For golde ne siluer that he me lente
Ne neuer falshede in my herte I mente
And sir quod he nolde of my prouyte
Spy ye so goodliche haue he to me
And kidith to me so gret gentilnes
Somwhat to quyte with your kyndenes
I wil you shewe yf ye liste to here
I wol you teche plener the matere
Holde I ony workyng in philosophye
Take goode hede ye shul wel seen at ye
That I wil a maistrye do or I goo
Ye sir quod the preest and wol ye so
Mary ther of y pray you hertely
At your comaundement sir trewlely
Quod the chanon and ellis crist forbede

To holde this theef vnder his seruise bee
Ful soth it is that suche profred seruise
Stynketh as witnesseth the olde wyse
And right sone I wol it verifye
In this Chanon vice of al trecherye
That euer more delit hath and gladnes
Suche fendly thoughtis in his herte to expres
Holy cristis pepyl he may to mischief bringe
God kepe vs from his fals dissimulinge
Nought wiste this prest with whom that he delte
Ne of his harm comyng nothing he felte
O sely preest o sely Innocent
With couetyse anon thou shal be blent
O graceles ful blynd is thy conceit
No thing art thou ware of his deceit
Whiche that this fox shapen hath to the
His wyles his wrenchis thou maist not fle
Wherfore to go to the conclusion
That referrith to thy confusion
Vnhappy man anone I wil me hye
To tellyn thyn vnwit and thy folye
And eke the falsnes of that other wrecche
As ferforth as my conynge wol streche
This Chanon was my lord ye wolde wene
Sire in feith and by heuen quene
It was another Chanon and not he
That can an hundrid folde more subtilte
He hath betraid folk many a tyme
Of his falsnes it dueliith me to ryme

Euer whan I spekē of his falshede
For shame of hym my chekes wexen rede
Algatis they begynnen sonne glowe
For rednes haue I non right wel I knowe
In my visage for fumes diuerse
Of metal whiche ye haue herde me reherse
Consumed and wastid hath my rednes
Nold takith hede of this chanons cursednes
Sir quod he to the preest lete your man goon
For quicsiluer that we hadde it anoon
And lete hym bringe vncis two or three
And whyl he comyth as fast ye shul se
A wondir thing whiche ye sall neuer or this
Sire quod the preest it shal be do ywis
He bad his seruaunt sette hym this thing
And he alredy was at his biddinge
And sente hym forth and cam anone ageyn
With this quicsilver shortly forto seyn
And took the vncis three to the chanon
And he hem leyde wel and faire a doun
And bad the seruaunt colis sonne forto bringe
That he anone mighte go to his werkynge
The colis right anon were y set
And this chanon took out a crosselet
Out of his bosom and shewde it to the preest
This instrument quod he whiche that thou seest
Take in thy hond and put thy self therin
Of this quicsilver an vnce and begyn
In the name of crist to werke a philosophir

Ther be ful selde whiche I wolde it profre
To shelde hem thus muche of my science
For here shulle ye se by experience
That this quikesilver I wol mortifye
Right in your sighte anon withouten lye
And make it as good siluer and as fyn
As ther is ony in your purs or myn
Or ellis where and make it malliable
And ellis holde me fals and vnstabil
Amongis folk for euer to apere
I haue a poudre that cost me dere
Shal make al good for it is cause of al
My conynge whiche I you shelde shal
Voideth your man and let hym be without
And shit the dore whylis we be ther about
Our priuyte that no man vs aspye
Whylis that we worke in this philosofie
Alas as he lady ful fillidy was in dede
This ilke seruaunt anone out yede
And his maister shitte the dore anon
And to her labour spedely they goon
This preest at this cursidy Chanons biddyng
Vp on the fyre anon set this thing
And blew the fyre and bisiedy hym ful faste
And this Chanon in to the crosselet caste
A powder not I neuer where of it was
I made of chalk or of erthe of glas
Or somwhat ellis was not worth a flye
To blynde with this preest and lady hym bye

The colis ſanto couchyn al aboue
For in tokenyng that J the loue
Quod this chanon thyn hondis tho
Shul werke al thing that here is do
Graunt mercy quod the preeſt : was right glad
And couchid the colis as the Chanon bad
And whyle he buſy was this fendly wrecche
This falſ chanon the foule fend hym feeche
Out of his boſom toke a bechyn cole
In whiche ful ſubtilly was made a hole
And ther ynne was put of ſiluer lymayl
An vnce and ſtoppid was withouten fayl
The hole with wex to kepe the lymayl yn
And vnderſtondith that this falſ gyn
Was nat made there but it was maad before
And othir thingis that J you telle ſhal more
Here aftir whiche that he with hym broughte
Er he cam there hym to begyle he thoughte
And ſo he dede er that they yede atwyn
Til he hadde ternyd hym he coude not blynne
Jt dullith me whan J of hym ſpeke
Of his falſhede feyn wolde J me wreke
Yf J wiſte how but here and there
He is variaunt he abideth nowhere
But talkith hede ſiris for goddis loue
He took his cole of whiche J ſpak aboue
And in his hond he bare it priuely
And whylis this preeſt couchid beſily
The colis as J you tolde or this

This Chanon sayde frendy ye do amys
This is not coldchidy as it ought to be
But sone it shal amendid be
Nold let me medle therwith but a whyle
For of you I haue pyte by sainte gyle
Ye be right hoot I se hold ye swete
Haue here a oloth andy whype alwey the weet
Andy whylis the preest wipidy his face
This Chanon took his cole with sory grace
Andy leyde it aboue vpon the myddwarde
Of the crosselet andy bleu wel afterwardy
Tyl that the colis gan faste to breme
Nold yeue vs drynke quod the Chanon theme
As swithe al shal be wel I vndertake
Sit be doun andy lete vs mery make
Andy whyn that this Chanon his lechyn cole
Hady brought andy the lymayl out of the hole
Into the crosselet it fil anon doun
Andy so it muste nedis be resoun
Syn it so euene aboue couchin was
But therof wist the preest no thing allas
He dempdy al the colis liche goody
For of the slighte he no thing vnderstoody
Andy whan this alkamystre sald his tyme
Ryse vp sire preest he saidy anon e stondy hyme
Andy for I woot wel yngot haue ye noy
Goth walkith forth andy bryngith a chalkston
For I wol make of it the same shappe
That an yngot is yf it may happe

And bringe out with you a kelle or a panne
Ful of water and ye shul wel se thanne
How that our lesynes shal thryue & preue
And yet for ye shal haue no myssbeleue
I le wronge conceyte of me in your absence
I wil not be out of your presence
But go with you and com with you agayn
The chambir dore shortely for to seyn
They openedy and shit and went hir wey
And forth with hem they took the key
And comen ayen without ony delay
What sholde I tary al the longe day
He took the chalk and shoop it in the wyse
Of an Ingot as I shal you deuyse
I sey he took out of his oldey sleue
A peyn of siluer euyl moot he cheue
Which that ne was but ay lyne of weyghte
And taktith hede nowh of his cursid sleyghte
He shoop his Ingot in lengthe and in breede
Of this teyn without ony dreede
So slighly that the preest it not aspiedy
And in his sleue agayn he gan it hyde
And from the fyre he took vp his mater
And in the Ingot he put it with mery cheer
And in to the water vessel he it caste
Whey that hym lyst and bad the preest as faste
Loke what ther is put in thy hondy and grope
Thou shalt fynde there siluer as I hope
What deuyl of helle sholde it elles be

Shauyng of siluer yes sire parde
He put his hondys yn and took vp a tryne
Of siluer fyne and glad in euery tryne
Blithe was this preest Whyn he sy it was so
Soddis blissing and his modris also
And alle halowes haue ye sire Chanon
Said this preest and I here malison
But and ye vouchesauf to teche it me
This nobil craft and this subtilte
I wyl be your man in al that euer I may
Quod this Chanon yet Wol I make a say
The seconde tyme that ye mowe take hede
And be expert in this at your nede
Another day assay in myn absence
This discipline and this crafty science
Lete take another vnce quod he tho
Of quyksiluer Withoute wordis mo
And do therWith as ye haue do or this
With that other Whiche that siluer is
The preest hym bisieth al that euer he can
To do as this Chanon this carsidy man
Comaundid hym and faste blew the fyre
Forto come to the effect of his desire
And this Chanon right in this mene Whyle
Al redy Was this preest forto begile
And for contenaunce in his hondys bare
A holow stickle take kept and bewar
In the ende of Whiche Was an vnce and more
Of siluer lymayl put as said is before

Was in his cole and stoppid with wey weel
Fast kept in his limayl euery deel
And while the preest was in his bisynes
This chanon with his sticke gay it dees
To hym anone and his powder cast yn
As he dede erst, the deuyl out of his skyn
Hym turne I prey to god for his falshede
For he was euer fals in thought and dede
And with his sticke aboue his crosselet
That was ordeynedy with that fals get
He stirid the coles til al relente began
The wey ayens the fyre as euery man
But it a fool be woot weel it muste nede
And al that in the sticke was out yede
And in the crosselet hastliche fyl
Nold gode sires what wil ye bet than wel
When that this preest was thus begyled ageyn
Supposinge naught but trouthe soth to seyn
He was so glad I can not expres
In no maner his mirthe and his gladnes
And to the Chanon he profrid eftsone
Gody and goody ye quod the chanon anone
Though I be powre crafty thou shalt me fynde
I warne the wel yet is thermore behynde
Is ther ony copir here I nne quod he
Ye quod the preest sir I trowe ther be
Elles go by vs sum and that as swythe
Nold gode sire go forth thy wey and hye the
He wente his wey and with his copir cam

And the Chanon in his hondy it nam
And of that copir he weyedy out an vnce
All to symple is my tunge to pronounce
As to mynstir of my wit the dulnes
Of this Chanon wte of al cursidnes
He semyd frendly to hym that knewh hym nought
But he was fendly bothe in work and thought
It werieth me to telle of his falsnes
And natheles yes wol I it expres
To that entent that men mowe beware therby
And for non other cause trewly
He put this vnce of copir in his croslet
And on the fyre as swithe he it set
And cast yn powder & made the preest to blowe
And in his worknynge for to stoupe lowe
As he dede er and al was but a Jape
Right as hym list the preest he made his ape
And after in the yngot he it cast
And in the pame put it atte last
Of watir and yn he put his oldey hondy
And in his sleue as ye he forth handy
Herde me telle he hadde of siluer a teyne
He slighly took it out this cursidy heyn
Vnbetynge of the preest of this fals craft
And in the pannys botom he it laft
And in the watir rumbelleth to and fro
And wondir priuely took it vp also
The copir teyn nat knowynge the preest
And hidy it and hym hent be the breest

And to hym spak and thus he sayde in game
Scripith a dowm be god ye be to blame
Help me nold as ye did whyle ere
Put in your hond and lokith what is there
This preest took vp this siluer eyn anon
And than sayde the chanon let vs goon
With thyse thre teynes which p we haue wrought
To som goldsmyth to loke yf they be aught
For by my feith I nolde for myn hood
But yf it were siluer fyne and good
And that as swithe prayd it shal be
Vnto the goldsmyth with thyse teynes thre
They wente and put hem in assay
To fire and hamyr might no man say nay
But that they were as hem ought to be
This sottish preest who was gladder than he
Was neuer bird gladder ayenst the day
Ne nyghtyngale in the seson of may
Was neuer noon that best list to synge
Ne lady lustier in carolinge
Or sorto speke of loue or wommanhede
Ne knyght in armys done a lusty dede
To stondry in grace of his lady dere
Than hadde this preest this craft sorto lere
And to the Chanon thus he spak and sayde
That for the loue of god that for vs alle deyde
As I may deserue it vnto yold
What shal this receyt coste tel me nold
Be our lord quod this Chanon it is dere

I warne you wel saue I and̄y a fere
In Engelond̄y can no man it make
No force quod he now fire for goddis sake
What shal I paye tel me I you pray
Wis quod he it is ful dere I say
Sire at o word̄y yf that it list you haue
Ye shul paye .xl. pound̄y so god̄y me saue
And̄y nere the frendship that ye did̄y or this
To me sholde ye paye more ywis
This preest the summe of .xl. pound̄y anone
Of nobles set and̄y took hem merichone
To this Chanon for this ilke verit
All his workynḡy was but fraude and̄y deceit
Sire preest he sayde I kepe to haue no loos
Of my craft for I wol kepe it cloos
And̄y as ye loue me kepe ye it seure
For yf men knewe al my subtilte
Be god̄y they wolde haue so gret enuye
To me be cause of my philosophie
I sholde be ded̄y ther were non other wey
God̄y it forbede quod the preest what ye sey
Yet hadde I leuer spende al the good̄y
Which that I haue or ellis were I wood̄y
Than that ye sholde falle in suche a myschief
Wel sire haue ye wel good̄y preef
Quod this Chanon and̄y farewel grant̄ mercy
And̄y went̄e his wey and̄y neuer the preest hym sy
After that day whey that this preest sholde
Makyn assay suche tyme as he wolde

Of this wrayt fare wel it wolde not be
Lo thus briapidy and begyllidy was he
Thus makith he his introduction
To bringe folk to her destruction
Confiderith firis hold that in eche aftat
Getting mey and goldy ther is debaat
So ferforth that vnnethis is ther noon
This multiplyinge blindeth so many one
That in goody feith y trowd that it be
The cause grettist of fuche fcarfite
Thyfe philofophris fpekyn fo miftily
In this craft that mey can nat com therby
For ony wit that mey molde haue nold a dayys
They molde wel chateryn as doon Jayys
And in her termys settyn her luft and pryn
But to her purpos fhul they neuer atteyne
A may may lightly lerne yf he haue aught
To multiplye and bringe his goody to naught
Lo whiche a lucre is in this luftyy game
A mannys mirthe it wol turne vnto graine
And empte alfo grete and heuy purfis
And makyn folk forto purchace curfis
Of hem that haue her goody to hem lent
O fy for fhame tho that haue be brent
Alas can they not fle the fyris hete
Ye that it vfe J rede that ye it lete
Left that ye lefe al for bet than neuer is late
Neuer to thryue were to longe date
Though ye prolle euer neuer fhul ye it fynde

Ye be as bold as is bayard the blynde
That blundrith forth and pryk caſtith none
He is as bolde to renne ayens a ſtone
As forto go beſides in the weye
So fayre ye that multiplye I ſeye
Yf that your yey may not ſe a right
Loke that your mynde lak not his sight
For though that ye loke right brood & ſtare
Ye ſhul wynne neuer of that chaffare
But waſte al that ye molde rappe and renne
Withdraw the fyre leſt it to faſte brenne
Medlith nomore with that art I mene
For yf ye do your thrift is goon ful clene
And right as ſwithe I wol you telle here
What philiſophris didy in this matere
Lo thus ſaith Arnolde of the nelb bouy
As his Roſary makith mencioun
He ſaith right thus withouten ony lye
Ther may noman mercury mortifye
But yf it be by his brotheris knoldlechinge
Lo hold that he withſayde this thinge
Of philiſophris ſadir was hermes
He ſaith hold that the dragon doutles
Ne dieth not but yf that he be ſleyn
With his brothir and that is forto ſeyn
Be the dragon mercury and non other
He vnderſtondeth ſulphur brymſtoon be his brother
That out of ſol and luna were I walde
And therfore ſayde he take hede to my ſalde

Lest nomay bisy hym this art forto seche
But he the entencion and the speche
Of philosophris vnderstonde ary
And yf he do he is a lewd may
For this science and this kunnyng sayd he
Is of the secret of secretis parde
Also ther was a discipil of plato
That on a tyme sayde his maistir to
As his book homer wol bere witnes
And this was his demaunde in sothfastnes
Tel me the name of that privy stoon
And plato answerd to hym anon
Take the stoon that Thitanes myn name
Whiche is that quod he magnacia is the same
Sayde plato ye sir is it thus
This is ignotum per ignocius
What is magnacia gode sire I you prey
It is a watir that is maad I sey
Of elementis foure quod plato
Tel me the rote gode sir quod he tho
Of that watir yf it be your wille
May nay quod plato certeyn that I nylle
The philosophris were swor̃ euerichone
That they sholde discure it to noon
Ne in no book it writyn in no manere
For vnto gody it is lef and dere
For he wol nat that it discuvid be
But where it likith to his deyte
May to enspire and eek vnto defende

Whan that hym lyketh lo this is the ende
Thay conclude I thus seith that godd of heuyn
Me wol nat that the philosophris nayn
Holde that a man shal come vnto this stoon
I rede as for the beste let it goon
For who so maketh godd his aduersary
As forto worchyn ony thing in contrary
Of his wil neuer shal he theryue
Though that he multiplye terme of his lyue
And there a poynt for endid is my tale
Godd sende euery goodd man bote of his bale

¶ Here endith the tale of the Chanons yeman of multiplicacõn and begynneth the tale of the doctour of phisik.

Ther was as telleth titus liuyns
A knyght that clepid was Virginius
Fulfilled of honour and of worthynes
Stronge of frendis and of riches
A doughter he hadde be his wyff
And neuer hadde he mo in al his lif
Fair was this mayde of excellent beaute
Aboue euery wighe that men might se
For nature hath with souereyn diligence
Fourmed her in so greet excellence
As though she wolde say lo I nature
Thus can I fourme and peynte a creature
Whan that me list who can me countrefete
Pigmaleon not though he forge and bete
Or graue or peynt for I dar wel seyn

Apellus Zephirus holde Wyght in Day
To grave or peynte or forge or bete
If they presumyd me to counterfete
For he that is the fourmour principal
Hath maad me his Vicair general
To fourme and peynte americhe trebly creature
Right as me list for al thing as in my cure
Vnder the mone that may Vane and Wepe
And for my Werk no thing Wol I kepe
My lorde and I be fully of accorde
I made here to the Worship of my lord
So do I alle myn othir creaturis
Of What colours they be or What figuris
Thus semyth me that nature Wolde say
This mayde Was of .xij. yer age and ek wey
In Whiche that nature had suche delit
For right as he can peynte a lily Whit
And rody as a Rose With suche pynture
She peyntid hath this nobil creature
Er she Was vp on her limys fre
Were al so bright as suche colouris might be
And Phebus diedy hadde her tresses greve
Lik to the strempys of his burnyd here
And yf that excellent Was her beaute
A thousand fold more vertuous Was she
In her ne lackith no condicion
That is to preyse ay le discrecion
As Wel in body as gostly chast Was she
For Whiche she flouryd in Virginite

With alle humylle and abstinence
With al attemperaunce and pacience
With mesure eek and bering of aray
Discreet she was in answerynge alwey
She was as wyse as pallas dame Isey
Her facunde eek ful womanly and pleyn
Alone countirfetith termys hidy she
To seme wyse but after her degre
She spak and alle her wordis more and les
Sobrenesse in vertu and in gentilnes
Shamefast she was in maydens shamfastnes
Constant in herte and euer in bisynes
To dryue her out of her slogardye
Cacus hidde of her mouth no maistrye
For wil and thought doth slomis euermore
As men in fyre wol caste oyl or greee
And of her olwey vertu vnconstreynyd
She hath ful ofte tymes here syk seynyd
For that she wolde fle the companye
Where lightely was to trete of folye
As is at festis reuellis and daunsis
That ben occasions of daliaunces
Suche thyngis make childryn forto be
To sone ripe and bolde as men may se
Whiche is ful parlous and hath ben yore
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldnes whan she is a wyf
And ye maistresses in your olde lif
That lordis doughtris haue in gouernaunce

Me talkith of my wordis no displesaunce
Thingis that been set in gouernaunce
Of lordis doughtris only for two thingis
Eythir forto kepe your honeste
Or ellis ye haue falle in freelte
And knowe wel y nold the olde daunce
And comme forsake fully myschaunce
For euermore/therfore for cristis sake
Kepe wel tho that ye haue vndertake
At theef of veneson that hath forlaft
His likorousnesse and al his theuys craft
Can kepe a forest best of ony man
Nold keep hem wel for and ye wil ye can
Lokith wel to no vice that ye assente
Lest ye dampnyd be for your eyyl entente
For who so doth a treytour is certeyn
And takith hede of that I shal seyn
Of alle treson souereyn pestilence
Is whan a wight betrayeth Innocence
Ye fadris and ye modris also
Though ye haue childreyn one or two
Youre is the charge of al her sufferaunce
Whylis they been in ignoraunce
Beware by ensamplis of youre liuynge
Othir be negligent in chastisinge
That they ne plisth for I dar wel seye
If that they do ye shul it deve abeye
Vnder a shepherde soft and negligent
The wolf hath many a sheep to rent

Suffisith ensaumplis I now as here
For I muste turne ayen to my matere
This mayde of whiche I telle expres
She kepte her self she nedid no maistres
For in her kuynge maydens myghte rede
As in a book euery worde in dede
That longith to a mayde vertuous
She was so prudent and so bounteuous
For whiche out sprongy on euery syde
Goode of her bounte and of her beaute wyde
That thorowh the londy they preysen hir echone
That louedy vertu saue enuye alone
That sory is of othir mennys weel
And glady is of his sorowh and vnhele
This doctour makith this discripsion
This mayde wente in to the toun
Toward the tempil with her moder dere
As is of yonge maydens the manere
Now was ther a Justice in the toun
That gouernour was of that Region
And so befyl this Jugge his yen caste
Vp on this mayde auising her ful faste
As she cam forth by there as the Juge stoody
Anone his hert chaungidy al his moody
So was he caught with beaute of this mayde
And to hym self ful priuely he sayde
This mayde shal be myn for ony may
Anone the fendy in to his herte ray
And taughte hym sodenly be what sleighte

The mayden to his purpos wynne he myght
For artis by no force ne by no mede
Hym thought he was not abyl forto spede
For she was strong of frendis and eek she
Confermyd was in suche souereyn beaute
That wel he wiste he myght her nat wynne
As forto make her with her body to synne
For whiche with gret deliberacion
He sente aftir a chorl in the toun
The whiche he knew ful subtil and ful bold
This Juge vnto this chorl this tale hath told
In secret wyse and made hym to assure
He sholde telle it to no creature
And yf he dede he sholde lese his hed
Whey assentid was this cursid ded
Glad was the Juge and made glad chere
And yaf hym yeftis precious and dere
Whey shapyn was al this conspiracye
From poynt to poynt hold that his lecherye
Parfourmyd shulde be ful subtilly
As ye shullyn here al openly
Hoom goth this chorl that highte claudius
This fals Juge that highte appius
So was his name for it is no fabil
But knowen for an historial thing notabil
The sentence of it soth is out of doute
This fals Juge goth now faste aboute
To hastyn his delyte al that he may
And so befyl sone aftir on a day

This fals Juge as telleth vs the story
As he was wont sat in his consistory
And yaf his domys vp on sondry caas
This fals chorle cam forth a ful gret pas
And sayde lordy yf it be your wille
As doth me right vp on my pitous bille
In whiche I pleyne vp on Virginius
And yf that he wil sey it is not thus
I wil preue it and fynde goody witnes
That soth is that my bille wol expres
The Juge answeridy of this in his absence
I may not yeue diffinyte sentence
Lett do calle hym and I wol gladly here
Thou shalt haue right and no wrong here
Virginius cam to here the Justices wille
And right anone was redy this answerdy bille
The sentence was therof as ye shul here
To you my lordy Appius so dere
Sheweth your poure seruaunt Claudius
How that a knyght callidy Virginius
Ayenst the lawe and ayenst al equyte
Holdith expres ayens the wil of me
My seruaunt whiche that is my thralle be right
Whiche from myn hous was stolyn on a nyght
Whylis she was ful yong I wol it preue
Be witnes lordy so that ye nat greue
She nys nat his doughter what so he say
Wherfore my lordy Justice I you pray
Yelde me my thral yf it be your wille

To this was al the sentence of his bille
Virginius gan up on the chorle beholde
But hastily er he his tale tolde
He wolde amende it as shulde a knyght
And by witnes of many a treuwe wight
That al was fals that sayde his aduersary
This auncien Juge wolde no lenger tary
Ne here a word more of Virginius
But yaf his Jugement and said thus
I deme anone this chorl his seruaunt haue
Thou shalt no lenger in thy hous her saue
Go set her forth and put her in our warde
This chorle shal haue his theal thus I warde
And when this worthy knyght Virginius
Thorolh the assent of the Juge aprius
Muste before his deve doughter yeuyn
Vnto the Juge in lechery to lyuyn
He goth hym hoom and set hym in his halle
And lete anon his deve doughter calle
And with a face ded as asshis colde
Up on her humbil face he gan beholde
With fadris pite stikyng thorou his herte
Al wol he not from his purpos conuerte
Doughter quod he Virginea by thy name
Ther been two weyes othir deth or shame
That thou must suffre allas that I was boze
For neuer thou deseruest wherfore
To dien with a swerd or with a knyf
O deve doughter whiche that al my lyf

I haue fostrid vp with suche plesaunce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter whiche that art my laste woo
And in my lif my laste ioye also
O gemme of chastite in pacience
Take thou thy deth for this is my sentence
For loue and nat for hate thou muste be ded
My pitous hond muste smyte of thy hed
Allas that euer Apius the say
Thus hath he Juged the to day
And tolde hir al the caas as ye before
Haue herd it nedith to telle no more
Mercy dere fadir quod the mayde
And with that worde she kneleth hir armys leyde
Aboute his necke as she was wont to do
The teris braste out of hir yen two
And sayde gode fader shal I dye
Is ther no grace is ther no remedy
No certis dere doughter myn quod he
Than yeue me leue fadir myn quod she
My deth to compleyne a litil space
For pitee Jaffa zaf his doughter grace
For to compleyne or he hir slouh alas
And god it woot no thing was hir trespas
But that she ran hir fader for to se
To welcome hym with greet solempnite
And with that worde she fyl a swoune anone
She riseth vp and to hir fader sayde
Blessed be god that y shal dye a mayde

Yef me my deth or that I shuld a shame
Doth with your childr your wil a goddes name
Andr with that worde she praieth ful ofte
That with his swerdr he sholde smyte softe
Andr with that wordr a swonne down she fyl
Her fadr with sorouful herte andr sel
Here hedr of smoot andr by the top it hent
Andr to the Juge he yaf it in present
As he sat in his domè in consistory
Whey that the Juge it sawh as saith the story
He badr take hym andr hange hym al so faste
But right anone al the pepil in thwaste
To saue the knyght for wlthe andr for pite
For knowhey was the fals iniquyte
The pepyl anonr hadr suspect in this thingr
By maner of this chorlis iangelingr
That it was by assent of appius
They wiste wel that he was lecherous
Forth with vnto this appius they gon
Andr cast hym in prisonr andr that anon
Where as he slowh hym self andr Claudius
That seruaunt was vnto appius
Was demydr forto be hongidr vp on a tre
But Virginius of his grete pyte
Prayde for hym that he was exilidr
Andr ellis certis hadr he be begilidr
The remenaunt were hongidr bothe more & lesse
That consentidr were to this cursidnes
Here may mey se how synne hath his merite

Seth Waar for nomay Woot holde gody Wol smyte
In no degre ne in no maner Wyse
The Worm of conscience Wol a ryse
Of Wicklidy lif though it so priuy be
That nomay Woot of but gody andy he
Whethir that he be lewdy may or leridy
He noot holde sone he may be a feridy
Therfore I rede you this counsel take
Forsake synne or synne you forsake
¶ Here endith the Phisicions tale. And
begynneth the Pardoneris prology.

OUr oste gay sWere as he Were Woody
Hawold quod he be naylis andy be Woody
This Was a fals thef a curfidy Justice
As shamefull deth as herte can deuyse
So falle on his body andy on his bonys
To the deuyl I betake hym attonys
Allas to dere boughte she her beaute
Wherfore I say that al men mold se
That yeftis of fortune andy of nature
Ben cause of the deth of meny a creature
Her beaute Was her deth I dar Wel sayn
Allas so pitously as she Was slayn
But here of Wol I not procede as nold
Men haue ful ofte more harm than prold
But trewly myn olden maister dere
This is a pitous tale forto here
But natheles passe ouer is no force
I pray to gody so saue thy gentil corps

And thyn Reynals and thy Jourdens
Thyn Jpocras and thyn galiens
And euery boy ful of letuary
God blisse hem and our lady seynte mary
So mote J the thou art a propir man
And lik a prelat by saint damyan
Thou hast spoke ynough J am not sey in terme
But wel J wot thou makist myn herte to erme
That almost J haue caught a Cardiakil
Be corpus dominus but yf J haue tryakil
Or ellis a draughte of corny moysty ale
Or but J here anon a merry tale
My herte is lost for pite of this mayde
Thou belamy John pardoner he sayde
Tel vs sum mirthis or Japis right anon
Jt shal be do he sayde by seynt Runyon
But first quod he here at this ale stake
J wol bothe drynke and ete of a Cake
But right anon thyse gentils began to crye
Nay let hym telle vs of no vetaudrye
Tel vs sum moral thing that we mowe lere
Sum wit and than wol we gladly here
J graunte ywis quod he but J muste thynke
Vp on sum honest thing whyles that J drynke
Here endith the Pardoners prolog.
And begynneth the Pardoners tale.
Lordings quod he m chirchis when J preche
J peyne me to haue an hauntey speche
Lryng it out as roundy as goth a belle

For I am be wote al that I telle
My teme is euer one and albey was
Radix malorum est auaricia
Furst I pronounce whens that I come
And than my billis shelde I alle and some
Our liege lordis seal is my patent
That shelde I furst my body to warent
That no man be so bolde ne preest ne clerk
Me to disturble of cristis holi werk
And aftir that telle I forth my talis
Bullis of popis and of Cardinalis
Of patriarkis and Bisshoppis I shelde
And in latyn I spelle wordis a felde
To sauryn with my predicacioun
And forto stere men to deuocioun
Then shelde I forth my longe cristal stones
Ycrampyd in cloutis ful of bonys
Relikes they been as wenyn they echon
Than haue I in latoun a sholdirbon
Whiche that was an holy ielwis sheep
Gode men say I take of my wordis keep
If that this boon be washe in ony welle
Of cow or calf sheep or oxe swelle
That ony worm hath ete or hym stonge
Touche he this boon anone he shal be sounde
And yet also more ferthirmore
Of pokkis and of scabbis and euery sore
Shal euery sheep be hool that of this welle
Drynketh a draughte take kepe of that I telle

Wol euery Wight or that the cook crowdeth
And Wold do ony thing that hym oldeth
Fastynge drynke of this Welle a draughte
As that holy Jelb our eldris taughte
His bestis and his stoor shal multiplye
And syris also it helith ielousie
And though a may befalle in gelous rage
Leet make With this Watir his potage
And neuer shal he more his Wyf mystryste
Though he the defaute by her Wiste
All hadv she take prestis tlbo or thre
Here is a meteyn eek ye may se
He that his hondv Wol put in that meteyn
He shal haue multiplyyngv of his greyn
Whan he hath sowen be it Whete or otys
So that he offre pens or ellis grotis
And men and Women o thingv Warne J yow
If ony Wight be in this chirche now
That hath doon syme horrible that he
Dar not for shame shryuyn be
Or ony Woman be she yongv or olde
That hath ymaadv her husbondv Cokeolde
Suche folk shal haue no power ne grace
To offrir to my relikes in this place
And Who so fyndith hym out of suche blame
Comyth vp and offrir in goddis name
And J assoyle hem by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle Was graunted me
By this gaude haue J Wonne many a yeer

My hundrid mark fyn I was pardoner
I stonde lik a clerk in many a pulpit
And whelle lewd pepyl and doun they set
I preche so as ye haue herd before
And telle an hundrid japis more
Thay peyne I me to streche forth myn neckis
And est and west vp on the pepyl I beckis
As doth a dowue sittynge vpon a bern
Myn hondis and my tonge goon so yern
That it is ioye to se my besines
Of auarice and suche cursidnes
Is al my prechinge to make hem fre
To yeue her pens and namely vnto me
For myn entent is not but for to wynne
And no thing for correction of synne
I recke not whan that they be beried
Though her soulis goon a blakeberied
For certis many a predicacion
Comyth ofte tyme of entencion
Some for plesaunce of folk and for flaterye
To hey auauncid be ypocrisie
And som for veynglory and som for hate
For whan I dar not other whyle debate
Thay wol I stynge hem with my tonge smerte
In prechinge so that they shul not asterte
To hey diffamed falsly yf that he
Hath trespassid oght to my brethern or me
For though I telle not his proper name
Men shal wol knowe it is the same

Be symonye or by other circumstaunces
Thus quyte I folk that doth me displesaunces
Thus spit I out my venym vnder helde
Of holynes to seme holy and vertewde
But shortly myn entent I wol discryse
I preche of no thing but of couetyse
Therfore my teme is yet and euer was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas
Thus gay I preche the same wyse
To suche as be lyvyng the spy of auerys
But though my self be gylty in that synne
Yet am I make other folk to blynne
From auarice/and sore to repente
But that is not my principal entente
I preche no thing but for couetyse
Of this mater it ought ynow suffyse
Than telle I of ensamplis many on
Of olde stores/longe tyme agoon
For lewd peple loviy talis olde
Whiche thingis can they wel reporte & holde
What trow ye whylis that I may preche
And forto wynne gold & siluer forto reche
That I wil lyue in pouert wilfully
Nay nay I thought it neuer trewly
For I wol preche and begge in sondry londis
I wil not do no labour with my hondis
And make baskettis and lyue therby
Be cause I wol not begge idelly
I wil non of the apostolis countirfete

All were it yeuyn of the poreſt yage
Or of the poreſt widdw in a village
All ſholde her childryn ſterue for famyn
May I wol drynke the licour of the vyn
And haue a role wenche in euery toun
But herkeneth lordingis in concluſion
Your likyng is that I ſhal telle a tale
Now I haue dronke a draughte of corny ale
Be god I hope I ſhal telle you a thing
That ſhal be reſon be at your likynge
For though my ſelf be a ful vicious man
A moralle tale yet I you telle can
Which I am wont for to preche and alſo lyme
Now holde your pees my tale I wol beginne
In flaundris ſumtyme was a company
Of yonge folk that hauntedyn folyly
As ryot hazardy Stewis and tauernys
And pleye the harlottis in many hernys
They daunce and pleye atte dyce both day & night
And etyn and drynkyn a boue her myght
Thorwh which they doon the deuyl ſacrifise
With ynne the deuyll tempil in curſidy wyſe
The ſuperfluytees abhominabil
Here othis be ſo grete and dampnabil
That it is grisly for to here hem ſwere
Our blisſed lordis body they to tere
Hem thoughte the iewis rente hym not y nough
And ech of hem at othir ſynne lough
And right anone can the Tombleſteris

Fleis and smale and yongh frutestrais
Singars with harpis Salldis Rasseis
Suche as bere lerry the tayll officiale
To kyndil and blowe the fyris of lecherye
That is annexid vnto glotonye
The holy wryt take I to witnesse
That lecherye is in wyne and in dronkenesse
Lo holk that dronkyn loth vnkyndely
Lay he his doughtris tuo vnbetymely
So dronke he was he nyste what he wrought
And therfore sore repente hym ought
Herodis who so wol the storyes seche
There may ye lerne and by ensampil teche
Whan he of wyne was repleet at his feste
Right at his owen tabil yaf his heste
To sle the Baptist John ful gilteles
Senek saith eke gode wordis doutles
He saith he can no differens fynde
Betwix a man that is oute of his mynde
And a man that is dronkelew
But that woodnes sallyn is in a shrew
Perseuerith lenger than doth dronkenes
O glotenye ful of cursidnes
O cause first of our confusion
O original of our dampnacion
Til crist hadde bought vs with his blody ageyn
Lo holk dere and shortly was to seyn
A bought was this cursid vilony
Corupt was al this worldy thorou glotony

Adam our fader and his wyf also
Fro paradys to labour and to woo
Were dryuen for that vice it is no drede
For whylis that adam fastid as I rede
He was in paradise and whan that he
Ete of the fruyt defendid on the tre
Anon he was out cast to woo and peyne
O glotenye on the oughte vs wel to pleyne
O wiste a man how mery maladies
Folowith of excesse and of glotenyes
He sholde be the more mesurabil
Of his diete sittyng at his tabil
Alas the short throte the tendir mouth
Maketh that est and west north and south
In erthe in eyr in watir mery to swynke
To gete a glotony mete and drynke
O poule of this mater wel canst thou entrete
Mete vnto womb and womb vnto mete
Shal god destroien both as poule saith
Alas a foul thing it is be my feith
To say this worde and foulir is the dede
Whan mery so drynkith of the white and rede
That of his throte he makith his pryue
Thrild that cursid superfluyte
The apostil weppynge saith ful pitously
Ther walkyn mery of whiche you told I saue I
I say it nold wepynhe with pitous vois
That they ben enemyes of cristis crois
Of whiche the ende is deth the womb is her god

O Wombe o bely o stynkynge cody
Fulfyllid of dunge and of corruption
At eyther ende of the foul is the soun
Hold gret cost and labour is to fynde
Thyse cookis hold they stampe streyne & grynde
And turne substaunce in to accident
To fulfille al thy lecrous talent
Out of the harde bonys knockyn they
The mary for they caste naught away
That may go thorow the golet softe and sote
Of spicery of leuys barke and rote
Shal be his sause ymade by delite
To make hym yet ay nedde appetite
But certis he that hauntith suche delicis
Is ded Whylis that he liuyth in thy vicis
O lecherous thing is Wyne and dronkenesse,
O It is ful of stryuynge and of Wrathidnesse
O dronkey man disfiguryd in thy face
Foul is thy breth foul art thou to embrace
And thorow thyn dronkin nose soundyth thy soun
As though thou saydist ay Sampson Sampsoun
And yet god Woot sampson drank neuer no Wyn
Thou farist as it Were a stykid swyn
Thy tonge is lost and al thyn honest cure
For dronkenes is lyke sepulture
Of mannys Wit and his discrecion
In Whom that drynke hath dominacion
He can no counsel kepe it is no drede
Now kepe you fro the Whyte and fro the rede

Namely fro the Whyte Wyne of lepe
That is to selle in fisshe streete or in chepe
This Wyne of spayne creepith sabtally
In othir Wynys growyng fast by
Of Whiche ther risith suche fumosite
That Whey a man hath dronkyn draughtis thre
And Wenyth that he be atte bonne in chepe
He is in Spayne right at the toun of lepe
Not at Pochel ne at bordeux toun
And than Wol he say Sampsoun Sampsoun
But herkenyth lordmgis o Word I you pray
That al the souereyn actis dar I say
Of victories in the olde testament
That thorou fery godi that is omnipotent
Were doon in abstmence and in praier
Lokith the Bibil and there ye mowe it lere
Lokith attilla the grete conquerour
Deyde in his sleep With shame and dishonour
Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenes
A Capteyn shulde lyue in sobirnes
And ouer al this auyse you right Weel
What Was comaundid vnto Samuel
Nat Samuel but Samuel say I
Redith the Bibil and fyndi it expresly
Of Wyne yeuynge to hem that [illegible] Justice
Nomore of this for it may Wel suffise
And now that I haue spoke of glotony
Now Wol I defende you sahardry
Hasardrye is fery moder of lesyngis

And of deceit amongis swerynges also
Of batayll of the tyme and of other mo
It is repreef and contrary vnto honour
For to beholden a comune hasardour
And euer the hyer that he is in astat
The more he is holden dissolate
If that a prince vse hasardrye
In al gouernaunce and al policye
He is as by comune oppinion
Yholde the lasse in reputacion
Stillebone that was holde a wyse Embassetour
Was sent in to garnatche with gret honour
Fro Calidone to make hem alliaunce
And whan he cam hym happith this chaunce
That alle the grettist that were of that londe
Pleynge atte hasarde he hem fonde
For whiche as sone as that it might be
He stale hym hom ayeen to his contre
And sayde there wil I not lese my name
I wol not take on me so gret defame
You for to a lye to non hasardouris
Sendith other wyse ambassiatouris
For be my trouthe me were leuer dye
Than I you to hasardouris shulde a lye
For ye that been so glorious in honouris
Shal not a lye you to hasardouris
As by my wil ne as by my trete
This wyse philosophir thus sayd he
Loke thou vse no pley of dyse in thy hous

Lokē elle hold the kynge Emetrius
Gonte hym a peyre of dyse in scorn
For he hadde vsed hasardrye ther he forn
For whiche he held his glorye and his renoun
At no value as of reputacioun
Lordis mighty synde othir maner pley
Honest ynough to dryue the day awey
NOw wol I speke of othis fals and grete
A worde or two as many lokes trete
Grete swering is thing abhominabil
And fals swering is a thing more reprouable
The high god forbad swering at all
Witnes of Mathew but in special
Of swering saith holi Jheromye
Thou shalt swere soth thyn othis and not lye
And swere in dome and in rightwisnes
But ydil swering is a cursidnes
Behold and se that in the firste tabil
Of high goddis hestis honourabil
Hold that the seconde heste of hym is this
Take not myn name in ydilnes amys
Lo rather he forbedith suche swering
Or hompeidy or ony other cursid thing
I say as he orde thus it stondith
This knowith they þ his hestis vnderstondith
Hou that the seconde heste of god is that
And furthirmore I wil the telle at plat
That vengeaunce shal not parte from the hous
That of his othis is outrageous

Ey be goddis precyous herte & be his naylis
And be his blody that is in hayllis
Sarys is my chaunce and thys is fyue & thre
Ey goddis armys yf thou falsly pley with me
This daggar shal throwh thyn herte go
This fruyt comyth of the bachid bonys two
For swerynge Ire falsnes and homicide
Now for the loue of crist that for vs dide
Lenith your othis bothe grete and smale
For cristis sake and herkenyth my tale
Thyse ryotours three of whiche I telle
Longe or to pryme were vonge ony belle
Were set hem in a tauerne to drynke
And as they sat they herde a belle clynke
Before a cors was caried to his graue
That on of hem gan calle to his knaue
Go bet quod he and aye redily
What cors is this that passith forth by
And loke that thou reporte his name wel
Sire quod the boy it nedith neuer a deel
I wis me told or ye cam here two hours
He was parde an old felow of yours
And sodenly was he slayn to nyght
For dronke as he sat on his bench vpright
There cam a pryue theef men clepe deth
That in this contre al pepil sleth
And with his spere he smot his herte in two
And went his wey with oute wordis mo
And maistir er ye come in his presence

He hath a thousandy sleyn this pestelence
Me thinkith it were necessary
Forto be waar of suche an aduersary
Deth is redy forto mete hym euermore
Thus taughte me my dame I say nomore
O seynte mary saidy this tauernere
The childy saith soth for he hath thus yere
Hens ouer a myle slayn in a gret village
Bothe may andy woman childy andy page
I trowe his habitacion be there
To ben auisidy gret wisedom it were
Er that he didy a may a dishonour
Ye goddis armys sayde this riotour
Is it suche peril with hym forto mete
I shal hym seke by dale andy eke by strete
I shal hym sle be goddis digne bonys
Harkyn felowis we thre ben alonys
Let ech of vs becomyn othris brother
Andy ech of vs holde vp his hondy to other
Andy we wol sle this traitour deth
He shal be slayn he that so many sleth
Be goddis dignite or it be nyght
To gedir haue thyse thre her hertis hight
To lyue andy dye ilkie of theym with othir
As though he were his owen swore brothir
Andy vp they sterte al dronke in this rage
Andy forth they goon towardy that village
Of whiche the tauerner hath spoke beforn
Andy many a grisly oth haue they sworn

And cristis blissidy body they to vende
Deth shal be ded yf that he may hym hende
Whey they haue goon not fully a myle
Right as they wolde haue goon ouer a style
An old pure man with hem mette
This olde man full mekely hem grette
And sayde thus lordingis god you se
The proudest of thyse victours thre
Answerde what charl with hardy grace
Why art thold al forwrappid saue thy face
Why liuyst thou so longe in so gret age
This olde man gan loke in her visage
And sayde thus for I can not fynde
A man though I walke in to ynde
Neyther in cyte ne in village
That wol chaunge his youthe for myn age
And therfore muste I haue myn age still
As longe tyme as it is goddis will
Me deth allas wol not haue my lyf
Thus walke I lik a recheles caytiff
And on the grounde whiche is my modris gate
I knocke with my staf erly and late
And say leue modir lete me yn
Lo holl I vanysh flesh blood and skyn
Allas whan shal my bonys be at reste
Modir with you wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chambir longe tyme hath be
Ye for an heir clout to wrappe ynne me
But yet to me she wol not do that grace

For whiche ful pral & wreechidy is my face
Andy seris to you it is no curtesie
To spelie to ay olde may wilony
But y trespasse othir in wordy or in dede
Ye may your selfe in holy writ rede
Ayenst ay olde may hore up oy his heedy
Ye sholde a ryse wherfore I you rede
Me doth to noy olde may harmy nolb
Momore than ye wolde mey dide to you
In age yf ye sholde longe abyde
Andy godi be with you whyr ye go or ryde
I muste go thyder as I haue to do
May olde chorle be godi thou shalt not so
Seyde this othir hasardour anoy
Thou partist not so lightly be seynt John
Thou spakiste right nolb of that treitour deth
That in this contre al our frendis sleth
Haue her my trouthe thou art his aspye
Tel whyre he is or thou shalt dye
Be godi andy by the holy sacrement
For shortly thou art one of his assent
To sle vs yonge folk thou fals theef
Nolb seris yf that it be to you leef
To fynde deth turne up this crokidy wey
For in that groue I hym salb laste be my fey
Vnder a tre andy there he wol abyde
For your booste he wil no thingy hym hyde
Se ye that Olde right there ye shul hym fynde
Godi saue you that boughte al may kynde

And you amende thus sayde this olde may
And euery of thyse Riotours so they way
Til they cam to the tre and there they found
Of floreyns fyn golde J coyned rounde
Wel nye an echte bussheles as hem thoughte
No lengir than after deth they soughte
But ech of theym so glad Was of that sighte
For that the floreyns so fair Were and brighte
That doun they sat be the precyous hord
The Worste of hem he spak the firste Worde
Bretheryn quod he take kepe What J saye
My Wit is gret though J bourde and playe
This tresour hath fortune vnto vs yeuyn
In mirthe and Jolite our lif to lyuyn
And lightly as it comyth so Wol We spende
Ey goddis precyous dignyte Who Wende
To day that We shulde haue so fair a grace
But mighte this gold be caried fro this place
Hoom to my hous or ellis vnto youris
Than mighte We say that it Were al ouris
Than Were We in high felicite
But trewly by day it may not be
Men Wolde say that We Were theuys stronge
And for our owen tresour don vs honge
This tresour muste be caried be nyght
As Wisely and as slily as it mighte
Wherfore J rede leet lotte among vs alle
Drawe cut let se Where that it Wil falle
He that hath the shortist cut With herte blithe

Shal reme to towy and that ful swithe
To bringe vs heed and wyne ful priuely
And two of vs shal kepe ful subtilly
This tresour well and yf he wol not tarien
Whan it is nyght we wol this tresour carien
By one assent where as vs list best
That on of hem brought stralbe in his fist
And bad him dralbe & loke on whom it wold falle
And it fyl on the yongest of hem alle
And forth toward the towy he wente anone
And al so sone as he was goon
That on of hem spak thus vnto that othir
Thou wotist well thou art my swory brothir
Thy profit wol I telle the right anon
Thou wost well that our felow is goon
And here is gold and that ful gret plente
That shal be departid among vs thre
But natheles yf I can shape it so
That it departid were among vs two
Had I not doon a frendis tary to the
That othir answerde y not how it might be
I wot wel the gold shal be ours two
What shul we say what shul we do
Shal it be counsell sayde the firste shrewe
And I shal telle the in wordis fewe
What we shul do and bringe it wel aboute
I graunte quod that othir out of doute
That be my trouthe I wol the not bewrey
Now quod he thou wotist wel we be two eyen

And eyther of vs shal strenger be than oy
Loke when he is set and than anoy
A ryse as though thou woldist with hym pleye
And I shal ryue hym thorough the sides eyghe
Whiles thou strogelist with hym in game
And with thy daggar loke thou do the same
And than shal al this gold departid be
My dere frend betwix me and the
Than may we bothe our lustis fulfille
And pleye atte dyse right at our owen wille
And thus acordid be thyse shrewis eyghe
To sle the thridde as ye haue herd me seye
This yongest whiche that went to the toun
Ful ofte in herte he rollid vp and doun
The beaute of thyse flowreyns newe and bright
O lord quod he yf so were that I might
Al this tresour wynne to my self alone
Ther nys noman that liuyth vnder trone
Of godis that sholde lyue as mery as I
And atte laste the fend our enemy
Put in his herte that he sholde poyson beye
With whiche he mighte sle his felawis eyghe
For why the fend fond hym in suche liuynge
That he hadde leue hym in sorow to bringe
For this was vtterly his entent
To sle hem bothe and neuer to repent
And forth he goth no lenger wolde he tary
Into the toun vnto apotecary
And prayde hym that he wolde hym selle

Som poiſon that he might his ratts quelle
And eek therwith was a polcat in his halle
That as he ſayde his capons hadde ſtalle
And ſayde he wolde worke hem yf he might
Of ſermyn that deſtroyde hem he nyght
The potecary anſwerdh thou ſhalt haue
A thing as wiſly god my ſoule ſaue
In al this worlde ther is no creature
That etyn or dronkyn hath of this confecture
Not but the mountaunce of a corn of whete
That he ne ſhal anon his lif forlete
Ye ſterue he ſhal and that in laſſe whyle
Or thou wolt go paſſing half a myle
This poyſon is ſo ſtrong and ſo violent
This curſid man hath in his hond it hent
And ſwithe in to the ſtrete vnto a man
As faſte as euer he might he ran
And forthid hym large botellis thre
And in to the tweyne the poyſon pourid he
The thridde he kepte clene for his dronke
For al nyght he ſhoop hym forto ſwynke
In caryinge of this gold out of this place
And whan this victour with ſory grace
Hadde fillid ful his grete botellis thre
To his felowis ayeen repayrith he
What nedith it to ſermone of it more
For right as they hadde caſt his deth afore
Right ſo they haue hym ſleyn right anone
And whey this was doon they ſpak that one

Now let vs sitte & drynke & make vs mery
And afterward we wil his body bery
And afterward it happid hym y was
To take the hotel there the poyson was
And dranke and yaf his felow drynke also
For whiche anon they steruyn bothe two
But certis I suppose that Auicenne
Wrote neuer in no canon ne in no sene
More wonder sorowful of empoysonynge
Thus hadde thyse wrecches two her endynge
Thus endid hey thyse homicides two
And the fals empoysoner also
O auarice syme ful of auarednes
O traytours homicides o wickidnes
O glotony o luxury o hasardrye
Thou blasphemar of crist with vilonye
And othes grete of vsage and of pryde
Allas mankynde how may it betyde
That to thy creatour whiche that the wrought
And with his precyous blood the bought
Thou art so fals and so vnkynde allas
Now gode mey godi forgeue you your trespas
And wave you from the synne of auarice
My holy pardon may you alle warisshe
So that ye offir nobillis or sterlingis
Or ellis siluer spoons brochis or ryngis
Wolwith your fredi vnder thyse holy bullis
Comyth vp ye wyuys offrith of your wollis
Your names I entre in my roll anon

Into the blisse of heuyn shal ye goon
I you assoylle be my high power
You that wol offre as clene and as cleer
As ye were bore lo seris thus I preche
And Jhesu crist that is our soulis leche
So graunte you his pardon to receyue
For that is best I wil you not deceyue
But seris o word forgat I in my tale
I haue relikes and pardon in my male
As fair as ony man in Engelond
Which were me yeue be the popis hond
Yf ony of you wol of deuocioun
Offryn and haue myn absolucion
Comyth forth anon and knelith here adoun
And mekely receyueth your pardoun
And ye shul haue my pardon that is heende
Or elles taketh pardon as ye wende
Al nelbe and fressh at euery tounys ende
So that ye offir alwey nelde and nelbe
Noblis or pens which that been good & trelbe
It is an honour to euerich that is here
That ye molbe haue a sufficiaunt pardonere
To assoylle you in contre as ye ryde
For auenturis which that may betyde
For pauenture ther may falle oon or two
Doun of his hors and breke his necke a two
Loke which a surete it is to you alle
That I am in your felechip y falle
That may assoylle you bothe more and lees

Whan that the soule shal fro the body pas
I wot that our ost here shal beginne
For he is most inuoluped in synne
Comyeth forth sir ost and offreth right anon
And thou shalt kisse the relikes euerichon
Ye for a grote vnbokle anon thy purs
Nay nay quod he than haue I cristes curs
Let be quod he it shal not be so theche
Thou woldist make me kis thy olde breche
And swere it were a relik of a seynt
Though it were with thy fundement I peynt
But by that cros whiche that saint Eleyn fond
I wolde I hadde thy coillons in my hond
In stede of relikes other of seintewary
Let autte hem of I wol helpe the hem to cary
They shul be shryned in an hoggis tord
This pardoner answerd not a word
So wroth he was he wolde no word sey
Now quod our ost I wol no lenger pley
With the ne with non other angry may
But right anon the worthy knyght began
When that he sawh that al the pepl lough
Nomore of this for it is right ynough
Sir pardoner be mery and glad of chere
And ye sir ost that be to me so dere
I pray you that ye kisse the pardoner
And pardoner I pray the drawh the nere
And as we didy let vs laughe and pley
Anon they kissedy and ridey forth her wey

Here endeth the Pardoners tale.
And begynneth the Shypmannys tale.

A Marchaunt sometyme was at seynt omers
That riche was wherfore men held hym wise
As wyf he hadde of excellent beaute
And compenable and veuelous was she
Which thyng anusith more dispence
Than worth is al the fauour and reuerence
That men hem doon at festes and at dirges
Such salutacions and contenaunces
Passyn as doth a shadow vp on a wal
But wo is hym that paien muste for al
The sely husbonde algate he must paye
He muste vs clothe and eek arraye
For his owen worshyp ful richely
In which aray we daunsyn jolily
And yf that he naught paye parauenture
Or lene vs gold and that is pleyn vre
This nobil Marchaunt held a nobil hous
For which he hadde so greet repeir
For his largenes and for his wyf was feir
That folie is but lyghtyneth to my tale
Among alle thyse gestis grete and smale
Ther was a monk a fair man and a bold
I trowe that xxty. Winter he was old
That euer in one was drawyng to that place

This yonge monk that was so fair of face
Acquaynted was so with the goode man
Sith that their first knowlage began
That in his hous as familier was he
As is possible ony frende to be
But for asmuche as this goode man
And eke this monk of whiche I began
Were both two born in on village
The monk of hym claymeth for cosinage
And he ayen saith not onys nay
But was as glad ther of as foul of day
For to his herte it was a grete plesaunce
Thus been they knyt with etern alyaunce
And eche of hem gan other forto ensure
Of brotherhede whyle that her lyf may dure
Fro was dane John and namly of dispence
As in that hous and ful of diligence
To doon plesaunce and also gret costage
He nat forgat to yeve the leste page
Whan that he cam fum maner honest thing
For whiche they were as glad of his comyng
As foul is fayn whan somme vp risith
Nomore of this for it suffisith
But so be fyl this marchaunt on a day
Shoop hym to make redy his aray
Toward the toun of Bruggis forto fare
To byen there aperaillis of ware
For whiche he hadde to Paris sent anon
A messanger and praid hath dan John

That he sholde come to saint denys and pley
With hym and his wyf a day or elleye
Er he to Briggis wente in alle wyse
This nobil monk the whiche I you deuyse
Hath of his abbot as hym list licence
Be cause he was a man of high prudence
And eke an Officer out forth ryde
To se her graungis and her bernys wyde
And to saint denys comyth hym anone
Who was so welcom as my lord dan Johy
Our dere cosyn ful of curtesie
With hym he broughte a Jub of malueisie
And eke another ful of fyn wernage
And vitayl as was his vsage
And thus I lete hem drynke ete and pleye
This Marchaunt and this monk a day or elleye
The thrid day eke Marchaunt vp ariseth
And on his nedis sadly hym auiseth
And vp to his countrhous goth he
To reken with hym self wel may he
Of that yeer how that it with hym stood
And how that he dispendid had his good
And wher encreesid he hadde or none
His bokis and his bagis many one
He leyeth before hym on his countyng bord
Ful riche was his tresour and his hord
For which ful fast his countour he shette
And eke he wolde that no man sholde hym lette
Of his accountynge for the mene tyme

And thus he sat til it was passid prime
Day Joly was risen in the morow also
And in the gardyn walkid to and fro
And sayde his thingis ful curiously
This goody wyf cam walkinge priuely
Into the gardyn there as he walkid softe
And hym salewid as she hath doon ofte
A mayde childe cam in her company
Whiche as she list she may gouerne and gye
For yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
O dere cosyn myn day Joly she sayde
What eyleth you so rathe forto ryse
Nece quod he it ought ynough suffise
Fyue houris to slepe on a nyght
But it were for any old pallid wight
As been thyse olde wedded men that lien & dare
As in a fourme sittith a wery hare
Were al for straught wit houndis grete & smale
But dere nece why loke ye so pale
I trowe certis that our goody may
Hath you labourid sith the nyght began
That you were nede to vestyn hastely
And with that word he lough ful merily
And with his ollen thought wept al tendy
This faire wyf gan shake her hedy
And sayde thus ye gody woot quod she
May cosyn it stondith not so with me
For by that god that yaf me soule and lyf
In al the reme of Fraunce is ther no wyf

That lasse lust hath to that sory play
For y may synge allas and wel a wey
That I was borin but to no wyght quod she
Dar I not telle how it stondith with me
Wherfore I thinke out of this londy to wende
Or ellis of my self to make an ende
So ful am I of drede and of care
This monk began up on this wyf to stare
And sayde allas myn nece godi forbede
Ye for ony sorow or for ony drede
For do your self/but tel me your greef
Paraventure I may in your myschief
Counsel or helpe and therfor tellith me
All your anoye/for it shal secret be
For on my port hose here I make myn oth
That neuer in my lif for leef ne loth
Me shal I of no counsel you bewreye
The same quod she to you y seye
Be godi and be this portose I you swere
Though men wold me al to pecis tere
Me shal I neuer forto go to helle
Bewrey o wordi of thingi that ye me telle
Nat for no cosynage/ne alliaunce
But surely for loue/and affiaunce
Thus been they swore and there up on I list
And eche talkith to other what them list
Cosyn quod she yf I hadde space
As I haue none and namly in this place
Thy wolde I telle a legende of my lif

What I haue suffrede syn I was wyf
With my husbonde al be he your cosyn
Nay qd this monk by god & by saint Martyn
He is nomore cosyn to me
Than is the leef that hangith on the tre
I clepe hym so by seynt denys of Fraunce
To haue of hym the more acqueyntaunce
Andy of you whom I loue specially
Aboue alle women sikirly
This swere I you on my profession
Telleth your greef lest he come doun
Andy hasteth you andy go abey anon
My dere loue quod she o day Johy
Ful leef were me this counsel to hyde
But out it moot it may no lengir abyde
My husbonde is to me the worste man
That euer was sith the worlde began
But sith I be cam a wyf it sittith not me
To telle no wight our priuyte
Neyther in bedy ne in no place
Godys childe I sholde it telle for his grace
A wyf sholde nat seyn of her husbonde
But al honour as I can understonde
Saue vnto you thus muchel I telle shal
As helpe me godys he is not worth at al
In no degre the value of a flye
But yet me greuith most his nygardye
Andy wel ye woot that women naturelly
Desiren thingis as wel as do I

They wolde that her husbondis sholde be
Hardy and wyse/riche and therto fre
And buxom to his wyf and fressh a bedde
But by that ilke lord that for vs bledde
For his honour my self to arraye
Sonday next I muste nedis paye
An hundreth frankis or ellis I am lore
Yet were I leuer to be vnbore
Than me were to disclaunder or vilony
And yf my husbonde mighte it spye
I nere but lost and therfore I you pray
Lene me this summe or ellis muste I dey
Dane John I say lene me this .C. frankis
Parde I wol not fayle you my thankis
If that ye list to do that I you pray
For at a certayn day I wol you pay
And doy to you what plesaunce or seruise
That I shal doon right as ye can deuyse
And but I do goon take on me lengtaunce
As foul as euer hadde genyliouy of Fraunce
This gentil monk answerde in this manere
Sowh trewly myn owen lady dere
I haue on you quod he so gret a routhe
That I you swere and plighte my trouthe
That whan your husbonde is to shaunteris fare
I wol deliuer you out of this care
For I wyl bryngе you an .C. frankis
And with ꝑ Wordy he caughte her by the shankis
And her embraceth harde & kiste her ofte

Goth nowe your wey quod he al stille & softe
And lete vs dyne as sone as ye may
For be my kalander it is pryme of the day
Goth nowe and leey as trewe as I shal be
Nowe ellis gody forbede sir quod she
And forth she goth as ioly as a pye
And bad the cokis that they sholde hye
So that men myghte dyne atte none
Up to her husbonde is she gon
And knocklith at his countour boldly
Who is there quod he Wetir it am I
Quod she What sire howe longe wol ye faste
Howe longe tyme wil ye rekyn and caste
Your summys and your bokis & your thingis
The deuyl haue part of all suche rekenyngis
Ye haue ynough parde of goddis sonde
Com do wy to day and leet your buggis stonde
Ne be ye not a shamyd that dame Johy
Shal fastinge al this longe day goon
What lete vs go here amasse and go dyne
Ye quod this man litil canst thou deuyne
The coztous besines that we haue
For of vs chapmen al so gody me saue
And by that lozd that clepidis saint Jue
Scarcely among twies ten twelue shal thryue
Contimuelly lastyngy to their age
We may wel make chere and goody visage
And dryue forth the worlde as it may be
And kepe our astat in priuyte

Tyl we be redy or elles that we pleye
A pilgremage or goon out of the wey
And therfore haue I gret necessite
Vpon this queynte worlde to auyse me
For euer more we muste stonde in drede
Of hap and fortune in our Chapmanhede
To Flaundris wol I go to morowe at day
And come ayeen as sone as euer I may
For whiche dere wyf I the beseke
As he to euery wight buxum and meke
And forto kepe our goody be corious
And honestly gouerne wel our hous
Thou hast ynough in euery maner wyse
That to a thrifty housoldy may suffise
Thy lackith none aray ne non vitayl
Of siluer in thy purs shalt thou not fayll
And with that wordy his countrefete he shit
And doun he goth he wolde no lenger lette
But hastely amasse was there saidy
And spedely the tablis were leidy
And to dyner faste they hem spedde
And richely the chapman this monk fedde
And aftir dynere Dan Johy sobirly
This chapman tolde apart propirly
And sayde hym thus, cosyn it stondith so
That wel I se to Brigges wol ye go
Gody and saint Augustyn spede you and gyde
I pray you cosyn wisely thedir ye ryde
Gouerne you also wel of your diete

Frendly and namely in this nede
Wherby he ne dreth no straunge fare
Farwel cosyn good childe you fro care
And yf ony thing by day or by nyght
Yf it be in my power or in my might
That ye me wol comaunde in ony wyse
Hit shal be do right as ye wol devyse
O thing or that ye goon yf it may be
I pray you to lene it vnto me
An hundreth frankis for a wike or tweye
For certeyn bestis that I must beye
To store with a place that is oures
God helpe me so I wolde it were youres
I shal not fayle surely of my day
Nat for a thousandy Frankis o myle way
But lete this thing be secret I you pray
For yet this nyght this bestis muste I bey
And fare wol wel myn owen cosyn dere
Gramercy of your cost and of your chere
This nobil marchaunt and that anon
Answerde and sayde o cosyn myn dan John
Now sikirly this is a smal requeste
My goldy is youres whan that ye liste
And not only my goldy but my chaffare
Take that ye liste good childe that ye spare
But o thing ye knowe wel I nough
Of chapmen that her money is her plough
We may creaunce whyles we haue a name
But goldles for to be it is a shame

pay it ayen What it lith at your ese
After my might fayne Wolde I you plise
Thyse hundrid frankis sette he forth anon
And priuely he took hem to dan John
No Wight of al this lond Wiste of this lone
Sauyng this marchaunt and dan John alone
They drynke and speke & Rome a Whyle & pleye
Til that dan John ridith to his abbeye
The morow cam & forth ridith this marchaunt
To flaundris Ward his prentis brought him auant
Til he com to Brigges Wel and merily
Now goth this marchaunt Wel and besily
About his nedis and creaunsith and bieth
He neyther pleyeth at the dys ne daunsith
But as a marchaunt shortly to telle
He ledde his lif and there I lete hym dWelle
The sunday next that this marchaunt Was a goon
To saint denys is comyn dan John
With croune and berdy al fresh & newe shaue
In al this hous ther nas so litil a knaue
Ne no Wight ellis, but he Was ful fayn
That my lordy dan John Was comyn agayn
And shortly to the poynt right forto goon
This faire Wyf accordith With dan John
That for his hundrid frankis he sholde al night
Haue here in his armys bolt vp right
With her leggis al so brode and so Wyde
As of lengthe she may her self stryde
And this accorde parfourmyd is in dede

In mirthe al nyghe a lesi lif they lede
Day John fidelly on the Fibibil
His mynstralsie is swetter than the quynybil
Til it was day that day John yede his way
Andy bad the meyne farwel & haue goody day
For noy of hem ne no wighe in the towy
Hath of day John ony suspeciouy
Andy forth he ridith hoom to his abbeye
Or where hym list nomore of hym I sey
This marchaunt whan that endid was the feire
To seynt denys he gan agayn repaire
Andy with his wyf he makith feste andy chere
Andy tellith here the chaffar is so dere
That nedis muste he make a chevesaunce
For he was bounden in a recognysaunce
To paye twenty thousandy shel dis anoy
For whiche this marchaunt is to paris goon
To borowe of certeyn frendis that he hadde
A certayn of frankis & some with hym he ladde
Andy whan that he was come in to the towy
For chiertè andy greet affectiouy
Unto day John he goth first hym to pleye
Nat forto aye ne borowe of hym moneye
But forto vite andy se his welfare
Andy forto tellyn hym of his chaffare
As frendis doon whan they mete in fere
Day John hym makith feste & mery chere
Andy he hym tolde ful specially
How he hadde spedy by andy by

Thankith he god al hool his marchaundise
Saue that he muste in alle maner wyse
Maken a cheuesaunce as for the beste
And than he sholde be in ioye and reste
Dan John answerde certis I am fayn
That ye in hele as comyn home agayn
And yf that I were riche as I haue blis
Of .xx. thousandy shelds sholde ye not mys
For ye so kyndely this othir day
Lent me goldy and as I can and may
I thanke you be god and be seynt Jame
But natheles I took it vnto our dame
Your wyf at hoom the same goldy ayen
Vpon your bench she woot it wel certeyn
Be certeyn tokenys that I can you telle
Now be your leue I may no lenger dwelle
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon
And in his company must I goon
Grete wel our dame myn owen nece swete
And farwel dere cosyn til we mete
This marchaunt which þ was ful waar & wyse
Creaunsith hath and paidy eke in paris
To certeyn lombardis redy in her hondy
The somme of golde and gate of hem his londy
And hoom he goth as mery as a popingeay
For wel he knew he stoody in such array
That nedis muste he wynne in that viage
A thousandy frankis aboue al his costage
His wyf ful redy mette hym atte yate

As she was wont of olde vsage algate
And al that nyghe in mirthe they be set
For he was riche and cleerly out of det
Whan it was day the marchaunt gan embrace
His wyf al newe and kiste her in the face
And vp he goeth and maketh it ful tough
Nomore quod she be gode ye haue ynough
And wantonly ageyn with hym she playde
Tyl atte laste the marchaunt thus sayde
Be gode quod he I am a litil wroth
With you my wyf al though it be me loth
And wote ye why be gode as I gesse
That ye haue maad a maner straungenesse
Betwix me and my Cosyn dan John
Ye sholde haue warned me or I had gon
That he hadde you an hundred frankis paid
Be redy token and held hym ayl apaid
For that I to hym spak of cheuesaunce
Me semyth so as by his contenaunce
But nathles be gode our heuyn kyng
I thoughte to axe of hym no thing
I pray the wyf do nomore so
Tel me nold or I fro the go
Yf ony dettour haue in myn absence
Ypayed the lest be thy negligence
I mighte hym axe a thing that he hath paid
This wyf was not a ferd ne affraid
But boldely she sayde and that anon
Mary I diffie that fals monk dan John

I kepe not of his tokenys neuer a deel
He took me certeyn goldy that wot I wel
What aryl thedoy on his monkis snolbte
For godys it woot I wende withouten doute
That he hady yeue it me be cause of you
To do ther with myn honour andy my prolb
For cosinage andy eke for lelechere
That he hath hady ful ofte tymes here
But seth I se it stont in suche disioynt
I wol answere you shortly to the poynt
Ye haue no skatter detour thay am I
For I wol paye you redely
Fro day to day yf so be I faylle
I am your wyf skore it vp on my tayl
Andy ellis I shal paye as sone as euer I may
For be my trouthe I haue on myn aray
Andy nat in wast bestolbedy it euerideel
Andy for I haue bestolbedy it so wel
For your honour for goddes sake I sey
As be not wroth andy lete vs laughe andy pleye
Ye shal my ioly body haue to wedde
Be godys I wol not paye you but a bedde
Forgyue it me myn olben spouse dere
Turnyth hithir makith bettir chere
This marchaunt salb ther was noy other remedy
Andy forto chide it were but a foly
Syn that the thingy may not other be
Olb wyf he sayde andy I for yeue it the
Andy be thy lif be nomore so large

Here endith the Shipmannys tale.

Verba Hospitis.

Wel saidh by corpus dñs sayde our ost
Wolb longe moot thou sayle by the ost
Thou gentil maister gentil mariner
Godh yeue the monk a thousandh last quad yeer
Ha felolbes be Waar of suche a Jape
The monk put in the mannys hoodh an ape
Andh in his Wyues eek by saint Austyn
Draweth no monkes nomore to your Inne
But nold pas ouer andh lete Vs seke aboute
Who shal telle a tale first of al this Route
Another tale andh With that Wordh he sayde
As curteisly as it hadde be a mayde
My ladyprioresse by your leue
So that J Wiste J sholdh you nat greue
J Wolde deme that ye tellyn sholde
A tale next yf so Were that ye Wolde
Nold Wil ye Vouchesauf my ladyderе
Gladly quod she andh sayde as ye shul here

Here begynneth the prioresses prologh

Domine dñs noster quã admirabile
est nomen tuũ in Vniuersa terra.

O Lordh our lordh thy namé auer merueilous
Is in this large Worlde J spredh quod she
For nat only thy laude precious

Parfourmedy is le men of dignyte
But by the mouth of childryn thy bounte
Parfourmyth is for on the beste sowhyng
Somtyme sheweth they thyn heryynge
Wherfore in laude as J can and may
Of the and of thy White lily flour
Whiche that the haar and is mayde alway
To telle a story J wol do my labour
Not that y may encrece her honour
For she her self is honoure and the rote
Of beaute nepte her son and soules bote
O modir mayde O mayde and moder fre
O bussh vnbrent brennyng in Moyses sight
That raueysshedist down from the deyte
Throu thyn humbles the goost that in the alight
Of whoos vertu, when he thyn herte whit
Conceyued was the fadris sapience
Help me to telle it in thyn reuerence
Lady thy bounte thy magnificence
Thy vertu and thy grete humylite
Ther may no tunge expresse in no science
For somtyme lady or men praye the
Thow goost before of thy benignyte
And getist vs light of thy praiere
To gyden vs vnto thy sone so dere
My kompyng is so feble o blissful quene
Forto declare thyn high worthyneesse
That J ne may thy wit sustene
But as a child of twelfmonth old or lesse

That can ymeth: ony body expresse
Right so fare I and therfore I you pray
Bidith my songe as I shal you say

¶ Here endith the Princesses prologe.

¶ And here begynneth her tale.



Her was in asie in a grete Citee
Among cristyn folk a Jurye
Sustey̆nedy̆ by a lordy̆ of that contre
For soul vsurye and lucre of vilony̆
Hateful to crist and to his company̆
And thorow this strete men might ryde & wende
For it was fre and opyn at euery ende
A litil scole of cristen folk ther stoody̆
Down atte ferther ende in which ther were
Childryn an hep comyn of cristen bloody̆
That lernedy̆ in scole yeer by yeer
Suche maner doctryne as men vsey̆ here
This is to say to syngey̆ and to rede
As smale childreyn doon in her childhede
Among thyse childryn was ther a widowis son
A litil clergion. vij. yeer of age
That day by day to scole was his wone
And eke also wher that he saw the Jmage
Of cristis moder hady̆ he in vsage
As hym was taught to knele a down and say
His Aue maria as he goth by the way
Thus hath this widow̆ her litil sone taught
Our blissedy̆ lady cristis moder dere
To worshipp ay and he forgat it nought

For the ſely childy wolde alwey ſone lere
But ay whey I remembrid me on this matere
Seynt Nicholas ſtont euer in my preſence
For he ſo yongy to crist didy reuerence
This litil childe his litil book lernynge
As he ſat in the ſcole at his prymere
He Alma redemptoris mater herdy ſyngy
As childreny lernydy here antiphoner
And as he durſte he drewe hym nere and nere
And herkenydy ay the wordis and the note
Til he the firſte vers coude al by rote
Naught wiſte he what this latyn was to ſay
For he ſo yongy and tender was of age
But on a day his felowe gan he pray
To expoune his ſongy and his langage
Or telle hym why this ſongy was in vſage
This prayde he hym to conſtrewe and declare
Ful ofte tymes vp on his knees bare
His felowe whiche that elder was than he
Anſwerde hym thus this songy I haue herdy ſey
Was makidy of our blyſſidy lady free
Her to ſalue and eke her forto preye
To be our help and ſocour whan we deye
I can nomore expoune in this matere
I lerne songy I can but litil gramere
And is this songy maady in reuerence
Of criſtis moder ſaidy this Innocent
Now certeyn I wol do my diligence
To conne it al or criſtmas is al y went

Though that I for my prymer be prime
And forto be lete thaies in any hour
I wol it conne our lady to honour
His felaw taughte hym homwardy priuely
Fro day to day til he coude it al be rote
And than he song it wel and boldely
Fro wordy to wordy accordynge to the note
This a day it passidy throwh his throte
To scolewardy and homewardy whan he wente
On cristis modir set was al his entent
As I haue saidy throwou out the Jurye
This litil childy as he amy to and fro
Ful merily wolde he synge and crye
O alma redemptoris mater euer mo
The swetnesse his herte persidy so
Of cristis moder that he to her prey
He amy not stynte of singynge by the wey
Our firste foo the serpent sathanas
That hath in Jues herte his waspis nest
Up swal and sayde o ebreik pepil allas
Is this a thingy that is to vs honest
That suche aboy schal walkyn as hym list
In our despit and synge of suche sentence
Whiche is ayenst our lawes reuerence
Fro thens forth the Jewis haue conspiridy
This Jnocent out of this worlde to chace
Ay homicide therto haue they hiridy
Right at an aley at a pryue place
And as the childe gan forth by to pace

Thys cursyd Jue hym hent and held fast
And cutte his throte and in a pit hym cast
I say that in a Wardrowke they hym threw
Where as the Jnes purgid her entrayl
O cursyd folk of hewes al newe
What may your cruel entent you auayl
Murdir Wol out certeyn it Wol not fayl
And namely as the honour of god shal sprede
The blood out crieth on your cursyd dede
Martir solwdid vnto virgynite
Now maist thou synge forolwyng euer in oy
The Whyte lamb celestial quod she
Of Whiche the grete euangelist saint John
In pathmos Wrote Whiche saith that they goon
Before this lamb & synge a song al newe
That neuer fleshly Woman they ne knewe
This poure Widow awaytith al nyght
After her litil child and he cam nought
For Whiche as sone as it Was daies light
With face pale and dede and hevy thought
She hath at scole and ellis Where hym sought
Til finally so fer she gan to espye
That he last Was seyn in the Jurye
With modirs pyte in her herte enclosid
She goth as she Were half oute of her mynde
To euery place Where she hath supposid
By likelihede her child for to fynde
And euer on cristis moder meke and kynde
She cryde and at the last thus she Wrought

Among the cursed Jues she hym sought
She axith and she freyneth pitously
Of every Jue that dwellid in that place
To telle her yf her child wente aught forth by
They sayde nay but Jhesu of his grace
Yaf in her thought with yme a litil space
That in that place aftir her soy she seyde
Where he was cast in a pit beside
O grete god that parfourmyst thy laude
By mouth of Jnocentis lo here thy might
This gemme of chastite this emeraud
And eke of martirdom the Ruby bright
There he with throte Jcorwyn lith upright
He Alma redemptoris gan to synge
So loude that al the place gan ryng
The cristen folk that by the strete went
Jn cam forto wondir upon this thing
And hastely they for the Prouost sent
Which fonde the child freshly yet bledyng
And herieth crist that is of heuene kyng
And eke his modir honour of mankynde
And aftir that the Jues lete he bynde
This child with pitous lamentacion
Up taken was singing this song alwey
And with honour and gret procession
They carye hym in to the newe abbey
His modir swowning by his bere lay
Unnethe might the pepil that was there
This sorouful rachel meue from the bere

With turment & with ſhamful deth echoy
This prouoſt doth thyſe Jues ſorto ſterue
That of this murdir wiſt andy that anoy
He nolde no ſuche cursidnes obſerue
Euyl ſhal he haue that euyl wol deſerue
Wherfore with wilde hors he didy hem drawe
Andy aftir hangidy hem by the lawe
Vpon his here ay lieth this Jnocent
Before the hy anter whyle the high masse last
Andy aftir that the abbot andy his couent
Hem spedde forto bery hym ful fast
Andy whan they holy water on hym caſt
Yet spak this childy whan spreynt it was
He sangy o Alma redemptoris m the plas
This abbot whiche that was ay holy may
As monkes ben or ellis oughte to be
This yonge childy to coniure he began
Andy sayde o dere childy J halouse the
In the vertu of the holy trinite
Tel me what is thy cause for to synge
Syn that thy throte is cut to my semynge
My throte is kut vnto myn neckebony
Sayde this childy andy as he wey of kynde
J sholde a deide longy tyme agony
But Jhesu as ye m bokis synde
Wol that his glory laste andy be m mynde
Andy for the worship of his moder dere
Yet may J synge o alma loude andy clere
This welle of mercy cristis moder swete

I lourydy alwey andy aftir my kommynge
Andy whey that I my lif sholde forlete
To me she cam andy bad me forto synge
This anteme trwly in my dynge
As ye haue herdy andy whey that I hadi songe
The doughte she leyde a greyn on my tonge
Wherfore I synge andy synge muste certeyn
In honour of that blissedy mayde fre
Til fro my tonge takyn is the greyn
Andy aftir thus sayde she to me
My litil childy thay wol I seche the
Whey that the greyn is fro thy tonge I take
Be not agast I wil the not forsake
This holy monk this abbot of hym mene I
His tunge out caughte & tolke alwey the greyn
Andy he yaf vp the goste ful softely
Andy whey this abbot hady this meruayl sayn
His salt teris trillidy down as reyn
Andy grouelingy he fyl to the grounde
Andy stille he lay as he hady be y bounde
The couent eke lay vp on the pament
Wepynge andy herynge cristis moder deve
Andy aftir that vp they roos & forth they went
Andy tolke alwey this martir fro his beve
Andy in a tombe of marbil stonys cleve
Enclosyn they this litil body swete
There he is now godi leue vs forto mete
O yonge hewe of lincolny slayn also
With cursidy Jues as it is notabil

For it is but a lityl whyle a go
Prey eke for vs we sinful folk vnstabil
That of his mercy gody so merciable
Oy vs his grete mercy multiplye
For reuerence of his modir Mary
Here endith the Prioressez tale.
Whan saidy was this myrakil euery may
As sobir was that wonder was to se
Til that our ost to iapyn began
And thanne at erst he lokidy vp on me
And sayde thus what maner mā art thou qdy he
Thou lokist as thou woldist fynde an hare
For euer vp on the grounde I se the stare
Approche neer and lote vp merily
Now ware sirs and lete this man haue place
He is shape in the wast as wel as I
This were a Mopet in an arm to embrace
For ony woman smal and fair of face
He semyth elvyssh be his contenaunce
For vnto no wight doth he daliaunce
Say now sumwhat syn other folk haue saidy
Tel vs a tale of mirthe and that anoy
Hoste quod I ne be not euyl apaidy
For othir tale certeyn am I noon
But of a Ryme I lernyd longe a goon
Ye quod he that is goody ynow let vs here
Sone deynte thing me thynkith be thy chere
The Ryme of sir Topas.
Lystey lordis in goody entent

Andy I wol telle Iesumente
Of mirthe andy of solace
Of a knyghte fair andy gent
In batayl andy in turnament
His name was sir Thopas
I borne he was in fer contre
In Flaundris al be yondy the se
At Poperingy in the place
His fadir was a may ful fre
A lordy he was of that contre
As it was goddis grace
Sir Thopas wext a doughty swey
Whit was his face as paynemey
His lippis rede as rose
His rode is lik scarlet in greyn
As I telle you in goody certeyn
He hadde a semely nose
His her his berdy was lik saffroy
That to his girdil raught a doun
His shoon of cordewey
Of briggis were his hosyn broun
His robe was of sicladoun
That coste many a Jan
He coude hunte atte wilde deer
Andy ryde an hawkyngy for ryuere
With grey gosehauk in honde
Therto he was a gret archer
Of wrastlyngy was ther none his peer
Ther ony ram sholde stonde

They mournyd for hym par amour
Whan hem were let to slepe
But he was chast and no lechour
And swete as is the swetbil flour
That berith the vertue hepe
And so it fil vp on a day
For sothe as I you telle may
Sir Thopas wolde out ryde
He wolde vp on his hors stay
And in his hond a launcegay
A long swerd by his syde
He pryckid thowu a fair forest
Ther ynne is many a wilde best
Ye bothe buk and hare
And as he prycked north and est
I telle it you hym hadde almest
Betyd a fery care
Ther sprongen herbis grete and smale
The licorice and the Cetuale
And many a cloue gilofer
And notemygh to put in ale
Whethir it be moist or stale
Or forto ley in Cofir
The briddis synge it is no nay
The sperhauke and the popingeay
That ioye was to here
The throstil made eke his lay
The wode dowue vp on the spray
He sangh ful loude and clere

Sir Thopas fil in loue longinge
Al whey he herde the throstil synge
And prikid as he were wood
His faire stede in his prikynge
So swette that men mighte hym wrynge
His sides were al blood
Sire Thopas eke so wery was
For prikyng in the softe gras
So fiers was his corage
That doun he leyde hym in the place
To make his stede sum solace
And yaf hym good forage
A sainte marie benedicite
What aylith this loue at me
To bynde me so sore
Me dremyd al this nyght parde
An elf quene shold my lady be
And slepe vnder my goore
An elf quene wol I haue ybis
For in this worlde no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toun
Al othre women I forsake
And to an elf quene y me take
Be dale and eke be doune
And to his sadil he clamb anone
And prikid ouer stile and stoon
An elf quene to aspye
Til he so longe hath riden and goon
That he fond a priuy woon

In the contre of fairy
For in that auntre was ther nony
Neythir wyf ne childy one
That he hady of ony drede
Tyl that ther cam a gret geaunt
His name was sir Olliphaunt
A parlous may of dede
Andy sayde childy le termegaunt
But yf thou pryke out of myn haunt
Anone I sle thy stede with mace
Here is this quene of fairye
With harpe andy pype andy simphonye
Duellynge in this place
The childy sayde al so mot I the
To morow wil I mete with the
When that I haue myn armure
Andy yet I hope par ma fay
Or it be fully pryme of the day
For here shalt thou be slayde
Sir Thopas drew a talk ful faste
The geaunt at hym stones caste
Out of a fel staf slynge
But faire ascapidy sir Thopas
Andy al was thorough goddis grace
Andy thorough his faire berynge
Yet lestenyth lordynge to my tale
Merier than the nyghtyngale
I wil with you roun
Now sir Thopas with sidys smale

Walkyng ouer hill and dale
Is comyn agayn to toun
His mery men comaundith he
To makey hym bothe game and gle
For nedis must hym fighte
With a geaunt with heddis thre
Ful of paramour and iolyte
Of some that shon so bright
Com hithir he sayde my mynstralis
And gestours for to telle talis
Anone in myn armynge
Of Romaunce that been Ryal
Of Popis and of Cardinal
And eek of loue longynge
They set hym first whete Wyne
And mede in a masselyne
And ryal spicory
Of gynger breed that was so fyn
And licorice and eek comyn
With sugir that is try
He didy nept his Whit lere
Of cloth of rayle fyne and clere
A breche and eke a sherte
And nept his sherte an haketon
And ouer that an haubergeon
For persing of his herte
And ouer that a fyn hanberk
Was al y wrought of Jues werk
Ful strong it was of plate

And ouer that his cote armure
As whit as is the lily flour
In whiche he wol debate
His sheldy was al of goldy so reedy
And therynne was a boris hedy
Alkarboklil be his syde
And there se swoor ay ale and bredy
Holde that the Jeaunt shal be dedy
Betyde what may be tyde
His Jambeaux were of quyrebolyy
His swerdis shethe of Juory
His helm of latoun brighte
His sadyl was of rewelbone
His bridyl as the sonne shoon
Or as the mone light
His spere was of fryn Cypresse
That bedith werre andy no thingy pees
The hedy ful sharp y grounde
His stede was al dappyl grey
It goth ay ambil in the way
Ful softely and rounde
Lo lordis here is o fit
If ye wol ony more of it
To telle yet wil I fonde

Now holdy your mouth pour charite
Quoth kinyght andy lady fre
Andy herkenyth to my spelle
Of a bataylle of chyualrye
Andy of ladyes loue deury

Anon I wil you telle
Many spelyn of Romaunce of prys
Of hornchild and of Ipotise
Of beues and of sir Guy
Of sir Libeux and of sir playndemour
But sir Thopas berith the flour
Of real Chyualrye
His gode stede he gan bestryde
And forth upon his Wey he ryde
As sparcle out of bronde
Upon his creest he bare a toure
And there ynne stikid a lily flour
God schilde his body from schonde
And for he was a knyght auntrous
He nolde slepyn in none hous
But liggen in his hood
His bright helm was his Wonger
And by hym lith his destrer
Of herbis fyn and good
Hym self dranke Water of the Welle
As did the knyght sir percyuelle
So Worthily under Wede

No more quod our ost for goddis dignite
For thou so Wery makist me
Of thy Wery lewdnesse
That also Wis my soule bles
Myn eris aken of thy drasty speche
Suche another Ryme the deuyl I beteche
This may Wel be a ryme dogerel quod he

Why so quod I Why Wolt thou let me
More of my tale than another may
Syn it is the beste Ryme that I can
Be god quod he ful plainly at o Worde
Thy drafty rymynge is not Worth a tord
Thou dost naught ellis but spendist tyme
Sir at o Word thou shalt no lenger Ryme
Let se Wher thou canst aught telle in geste
Or telle ey in prose sumWhat that the list
In Whiche ther may be som mirthe or som doctrine
Gladly quod I be goddis Swete pyne
I Wol you telle a litil thyng in prose
That oughte like you as I suppose
Or ellis certis ye been to daungerous
It is a moral tale Vertuous
Alle it told ey somtyme in sondry Wyse
Of sondry folk as I shal you deuyse
And thus ye Woot that euery euangelist
That telle Vs the passyon of crist
Ne saith not al thing as his felaw doth
But natheles her sentence is al soth
And al accordinge as in her sentence
Al be ther in her tellnig difference
For som of hem saith more and som lesse
Whan they his pitous passion expresse
I mene of Mark Mathew Luke and John
But doutles her sentence is al on
Therfore lordingis I you beseche
If that ye thynke I Vary in my speche

As thus thoughe that I telle somdeel more
Of proverbes than ye have herde before
Comprehendid in this litil tretis here
To enforce with the effect of my matere
And thoughe I not the same wordis say
As ye have herde yet to you alle I pray
Blameth me not for as in my sentence
Shulle ye nowe here synde no difference
For the sentence of this trete lite
After the whiche mery tale this I write
And therfore harkeneth what I shal say
And lete me telle my tale I you pray

Sequitur Chaucers tale.

Among many other exiles was Melleus the [illegible]
was mighty and riche begat a daughter upon his
wyf that Callyd was Prudence Whiche daugh-
ter Callyd was Sophie / Upon a day befell that he for his
disporte went hym in to the felde for to pleye / His wyf &
his daughter hath he lefte with in his halle of Whiche the
dores were fast shytte / Ther of his olde foes haue hit a-
pied and setten ladders vnto the walles of his halle and
by the wyndowes ben entryd in / and slete his wyf & wo-
nen and his daughter with fyue mortel wounde in fyue sondry
places / that is to saye in her feet / in her handes / in her eares /
in her nose / and in her mouth / And lefte ben her for dede and
went ben her waye / Whan Melleus returned was in to his
hous and salbe alle this myschief / he like a mad man ren
tyng his clothes began to wepe and to crye /

Prudence his wif as ferforth as she durst bisoughte
hym of his wepyng to stynte / but not forthy he be-
gan to wepe and crye euer lenger the more / This
noble wyf prudence remembrid her upon the sentence of
Ouyde in his book that clepeth is the remedye of loue / where
as he saith / He is a fool that disturbleth the moder to wepe
in the deth of her child / tal she hath wepte her fille as for a
certayn terme / And thay shal a man do his diligence with
amyable wordes her to comforte / And praye her of her we-
pyng to ese / For whiche reason this noble wyf prudence
suffrid her husbondy to wepe & crye as for a certayn space
And whan she salbe her tyme / she saidy to hym in this wise
Allas my lordy saidy she Why make ye your self for to be

lyke a fool. For sothe hit appertayneth not to a wise man to
make suche sowlde youre doughter by the grace of godd shall
vanisshe & escape. Andd alle were hit so that she right nowe
were dede/ ye ne ought not for her deth your self to destroye.
Seneke saith/ the wise man shal not take to greete discōforte
for the deth of his children/ but certes he shuldd suffre hit in
pacience as well as he abideth the deth of his owen ppre pſone
THis Melleleus answerdd anoñ and seide/ What may
sholdd of his wepyngd stynte that hath so greete cause
to wepe. Jhesu Criſt our lordd hym self wepte for the deth
of lazarus his frende. Prudence answerde Certes wel I
wote a temparate wepyngd is nothingd defendedd to hym
that is sowlfulle amongd folk in sowlde But it is rather
graunted hym to wepe. The apostle Paule vnto the Rom
mayns wryteth/ Many shal reioyse with hem that make
ioye andd wepe with suche folke as pyne. But a tempate
wepyngd thoughit be grantedd hym/ Outragedous wepyngd
certes is defendedd/ Mesure of wepyngd shulde be considerydd
after the lore that Seneke techeth vs/ Whan that thy frende
is dede saidd he/ Lete not thyn eyen be to moyste of teerys
ne to moche drye. Al thoughd thy teerys come to thyn eyen
late hem not falle/ Andd whan thou hast loste thy frende/ do
diligently to gete the another frende/ Andd this is better
than for to wepe for thy frende whiche thou hast loste/ For
certeyn is no bote/ Andd therfore yf thou gouerne the by sa
pience put alday sowlde out of thy herte.
REmembre the that Jhesus sirak saith/ that a man that
is ioyous & gladd in herte/ hit hym conserueth flow
shingd in age. & sothly sowrousful herte maketh his bones dry

He saith eke thus that sorowe in herte sleeth full many a
man/Salamon saith that right as mothes in the shepe
flees anoieth the clothes/And the smale Wormes the trees
Right so anoieth sorowe the herte of a man. Wherfore he
ought as Well in the deth of our children as in the losse of
our goodes temporel haue pacience. Remembrynge on the
patient Job. Whan he had lost his children and his temporel
goodes and had endured many a full greuous temptacion
Yet saide he thus/Our lorde hath geuen hit to me/Our
lorde hath beraft hit me/right so as our lorde hath Wolde
right so hit is don/y blessid be the name of our lorde.

To thise forsaide thinges answerde Melleeus to his
Wyf Prudence alle thy Wordes ben soth saide he and
therto prouffitable/But treWly myn herte is troubled With
this sorowe so greuously that I Wote not What to doo/Late
alle thy trewe frendes saide prudence and alle thy lignage
Whiche that ben Wise come vnto the/and telle to them your
caas/And herkene What they saye in counceylynge and
gouerne yowe after her sentence/Salomon saith Werke alle
thy thynges by counceyll and thou shalt neuer repente/
Thanne be cause of the counceyll of his Wyf Prudence/this
Melleeus lete calle a greete cõgregation of folk as Cirur
giens/Phisiciens/olde folke. and yonge/and somm of his
olde enmyes reconciled as by their semblance to his loue &
to his grace and eke Wel hadde many somme of his neyghebours
that dide hym reuerence more for drede than for loue as hit
happeth ofte/Ther comen also many subtil flatterers and
Wise aduocates lernyd in the lawe/And Whan thise folke
Were assembled Were/This Melleeus shewed to hem

in sorouful wise his ende. And by the maner of his speche hit semed that in his herte he bare a cruel yre redy to do ven geance vpon his foes. And sodenly desired that he shold begynne the warre. But neuertheles yet axed he their counceyll vpon this mater. A cyrurgien by licence and assente of suche as were wyse rose vp. And to Melleheus sayde as ye may here.

Syre sayde he as to his Cirurgiens hit apperteyneth that we doo to euery wight the beste that we can doo. Where as we be withholden and to our patyente that we do no dommage. Wherfore hit happeth many tyme and ofte That whan eche men haue eche other wounded one cirurgien heleth hem bothe. Wherfore vnto our arte hit is not pertynent to norisshe warre me partyes to supporte. But certes as to the warisshyng & helyng of your doughter al be it so that she be perilously hurt & wounded. We shal do entendyf besynes fro day to day. that with the grace of god she shal be hool & soundy as sone as possible is. Almost in the same wyse the phisicians answerd saue that they saide a selde worde moo. That right as maladyes ben cured be their contrayes. right so shal men warisshe warre by pees. This feynede frendes that semed reconciled and his flatterers made semblaūt of wepyng & empeyred & grutched moche in this mater. Preysing gretly Melleheus of might. Of power of Rychesse & of frendes. dispreysing the power of his aduersaryes And saide bitterly. that he anone shold wrekyn hym on his aduisaries begynnyng warre. by woose thay ay aduocate that was wyse. by leue and by counceyll of other that were wyse And sayde lordynges for the nede whiche we ben assembled

in this place/is full hard thyng and high matter/be cause of the Wronge and of the Wikkednes that hath be don and eke be reson of the grete dōmages that in tyme comyng be possible to falle for the same/And eke be reson of the grete Richesse & of the power of the parties both/For the Whiche hit Were a full grete paryll to erren in this mater/Wher for Melleleus this is oure entente/We counceylle you/a bone all thyng that right anone thou do diligence in kepinge of thy proper persone in suche Wise that thou ne Wante none eyge ne Warde/thy body for to saue/And after in thy hous We counceylle that thou sette sufficient garnyson so as thy maye as Well thy body as thy hous defende/But certes for to meue Warre ne sodenly for to do Vengeaunce We may not deme in so litil tyme that hit shold be prouffytable/Wher fore We axen leyser and space to haue deliberation in this mas to deme/For the comyn prouerbe saith thus/He that sone demeth/sone shal repente/And eke men saye that that Juge is Wyse that sone Vnderstandeth a mater and Jugeth be leyzer/For al be hit so that taryenge be noyeful/Algates it is not to be reproued in yeuyng of Jugement ne in Vengeance takyng Whan it is sufficient and resonable/And that shewed oure lord Jhesu crist be ensample For Whan the Romayn that Was taken in aduoultrye Was brought in his presence to knowe What shold be don of her persone/al be hit that he Wiste Wel hym self What he Wold don/yet ne Wolde he answere sodenly but he Wold haue deliberation/and in the gronndy he Wrote Wyth/And be this cause We aye deliberation And We shal thay by the grace of god counceylle you that thinge that is most prouffytable. Wo sterte thay the

yonge folke attones and the moste parte of this compayne
haue herde this olde vyse man begonne to make noise
and saidey. Right so as while that yron is hoot men shold
smyte right so while that this thinge is fresshe and nesshe
shold men worken her workinges. and with a bolde boys they
cryden warre warre. Up wose than one of thise olde wise
men and made contenance with his honde that men shold
holde hem stylle and yeue hym audience. Lordinges saidy he ther
is ful many a man that cryeth warre warre that wote ful
litylle what warre amounteth. warre at his begynnynge
hath so grete an entre and so large that euery wight may
entre whan hym liketh and lightely fynde warre. But certes
what ende that therof shal falle it is not kyghte to knowe.
For sothly whan that warre is ones begonne ther is ful
many a childe vnborn of his moder that shal deye and stonde
yonge be cause of that warre or ellis lyue in sorowe or deye
in wretchidnesse. And therfore or ony warre begynne men
muste haue grete counceyll and grete deliberation And whan
this olde man wende to haue enforced hys tale by resons.
Wel nyghe attones began they alle tarysse for to breke his
tale and bad ful faste his wordes tabregge. For sothly who
so precheth to hem that haue no luste to here his tale his wor
des or his sermon anoyeth hem. For Jhesus syrak saith that
musyke in wepinge is a noyous thinge. This is as moche
to saye. As moche auayleth to speke before folke to whom
his speche anoyeth. As it doth to synge before hym that
wepeth. And whan this olde man sawe that he wanted
audience. al shamefast he sette hym down agayn. For Sa
lamon sayth. There as thou maist haue none audyence.

mistake the not to spelle/ I sir wel saidy this wise may that the comyn prouerbe us soth/ That goody counceyll hasteth wisty hit is most nede.

Yet hady this Melleeus in his counceyll many folk that priuely in his eye counceilledy hym certayn thynges andy counceilledy hym contrary in general audience/ Whan Melleeus salbe that the grettest parte of his counceill were accordedy that he sholde make warre/ anoy he condescendedy to their counceillyngy andy fully affermedy their sentence.

My lorde saide Prudence I pold beseche as hertly as I dar andy any ne haste pold not to faste/ Andy for alle guerdons as yeue me audience/ For piers alfons saith who so doth to the other goody or harme haste the not to acquyte hit/ For in this wise thy fronde will abyde/ Andy thyn enemye shal the lenger lyue in drede/ The prouerbe saith he hasteth wel that any abyde wisely/ Andy in wikkedy haste is no prouffyt.

This Melleeus answerdy to his wyf prudence/ I purpose not saidy he to werke be thy counceyll for many causes and resons/ For certes euery wight woldy holdy me than a fool/ this is to saye/ yf I for thy counceillyngy sholde chaunge thinges that ben ordeynedy & affermedy by so many wyse peple/ Secondly I saye that alle women ben wickedy & none goody of hem alle/ For of a thousandy men saith Salamon I fonde one goody/ But of alle women/ certes goody woman fonde I neuer noon/ Andy also certes yf I gouerne me be thy counceyll/ hit sholdy seme that I hady gyue to the ouer me the maistrye/ Andy goody soothede that hit were so/ For Jhesus syrak saith that yf thy wyf haue the maistrie

The is contrary vnto hir husbonde And salamon saieth to
the Wif ne to the childe ne to the frende neuyr in thy lyf ne
yeue power ouer thy self For better it were that thy childern
axe of the thinges that hem nedeth / than thou se thy self in ỹ
hondes of thy childern / and certes yf I sholde werke by coun
seill ynay my counceill muste be somtyme secrete tyl hit were
tyme that hit muste be knowe / And this may not be yf I
sholde be counceilled by the For Women can kepe no counceill
Than dame Prudence ful debonairly & with grete pa
cience hadde herde alle that hir husbonde liked for to saye
than ayeded she of hem licence for to speke & saide in this wise
My lorde saide she as to your first reson hit may lightly be
answerde For I saye that hit is no folye to chaunge counceill
whan the thing is chaunged or ellis whan the thinge semeth
other wise than hit was before / and more ouer I saye though
that ye haue sworn & behight to performe your empryse and be
Just cause ye do it not / men sholde not saye therfore that ye
were a lyer ne forsworn For the book saith / that the Wise mā
maketh no lesynge whan he torneth his corage to the better
And al be it so that your empryse be establisshid & ordeyned
be grete multitude of peple / yet dar ye not accomplysshe that
same ordenance but you like / For ỹ trouthe of thinges & the
prouffit be rather founde i fewe folk that been Wise & ful of re
son than be grete multitude of peple Where euery mā clatereth
what ỹ hym liste / forthi suche multitude of peple is not honest
And to ỹ seconde reson Where as ye sayn that alle Women ben
wicked / saue your grace / Certes ye despise alle Women in this
wise / & he that alle despiseth / alle displeseth as saith ỹ book.
& Senekke saith Who so Wole haue sapience shal nomā displese

But he shal gladly teche the scinnes that he ony Withoute pre
sumptiou or pride/and ony suche thinges as he ony not/he shal
not be ashamed for to lerne hem and enquere of lasse folk
than hym self/And that ther hath be many a good Woman
hit may be preuyd/ For Criste Wolde neuer descende for to
be born of a Woman/yf alle Women hady be Wicked/And
after that for the grete bounte that is in our lady Jhesu crist
Whan he Was risen from deth to lyf/Appeerd rather to a
Woman than to his apostles/And though that Salamon
saide he fonde neuer Woman good/yet folowetb not therfore
that alle Women ben Wicked/ For though he fonde no good
Woman certes many another may hath founden many a Wo
man full good/and full trewe/or ellis parauenture thentent
of Salamon Was this that in souerain bounte he fonde no
Woman/ This is to saye/that ther is nod Wight so good
that he ne Wanteth som of the perfection of god that is his
maker.

YOur thirde reson is this/ye saye that yf ye gouerne
yoW be my counceyll hit shold seme that ye had yeue
me the maistrye and the lordship ouer your persone/Sire
saue your grace/hit is not so/yef hit so Were that noman
shold be counceylled but only of hem that had lordship and
maistrye of his persone/ Men Wold not be counceylled so
ofte as they ben/ For sothly that man that axeth counceyll
of a purpos/yet hath he his fre chois Whether he Wil Werke
by that counceyll or not. And as to your fourth reson there
that ye saye that the Janglerye of Women ony not hyde thin
ges that they knowe/as Who saith a Woman ony not hyde
that she Wote. Syr thise Wordes ben to Vnderstande of

Wommen that ben Janglerresses & Wicked, of whiche Wommen
men saye, that there thinges dryuen a man fone out of his
hous, that is to saye. ſmoke. droppyng of rayn and Wicked
Wyues. And of ſuche Wommen ſaith Salamon, that it were
better to dwelle in deſerte, than With a Woman that is ryo
tous. and ſyr be your leue that am not I For ye haue full
ofte aſſaied my grete ſilence and my grete patience And
eke holde Well I can hyden and hele thinges that men ought
ſecretly to hyde. And ſothly as to your fyfthe reſon Where
that ye ſaye that in Wicked counceill Women Wynquyſſh
men, God Wote that reſon ſtandeth here in no ſtede For vn
derſtonde nold that ye aye counceyll to do Wickednes And
yf ye Wole Werke Wyckednes. And your Wyf reſtrayne
that Wickyd purpos and ouercome yold by reſon and by
good counceyll. Certes your Wif ought rather to be praiſed
than to be blamed. Thus ſhold ye vnderſtond the philo
ſophre that Wicked Wommen Wynquyſſhe her huſbondes And
ther as ye blamen alle Women & her reſons, I ſhal ſhewe be
enſample that they be good & prouffytable. Eke ſome men
haue ſaid, that the counceyll of Women is to dere. or ellis to
litil of prys. But al be hit ſo that many Women be lady
her counceill aryl & nothing Worth, yet haue men founde ful
many a good Woman, and diſcrete & Wiſe in counceyllyng
Lo Jacob be the counceyll of his moder Rebeca Wan the ble
ſyng of yſaac his fader & the lordſhip ouer alle his bretheren
Judith be her good counceill deliuerid the cyte of Bethule in
Whiche ſhe dwelled out of the handes of olipherne that had
beſiegede it & Wold haue it deſtroied Abigail deliuerid Na
bal her huſbond fro dauid ȳ kyng that Wold haue ſlayn hym

And preſidy the yre of the kynge by her wytte and by her goody counceyll, hyſter le her counceyll enhaunſedy gretly the peple of gody in the Regne of aſſuerus the kynge, And the ſame bounte in goody conceyllyng of many a goody woman may telle, And eke more ouer whan our lordy god hady made adam our former fader, he sayde in this wiſe, hit is not goody man to be allone, make we to hym an helpe semblable to hym ſelf lo here may ye ſee that yf women were not goody and her counceyll goody and prouffytable, our lordy gody of heuen wold neuer haue wrought hem, ne called hem helpe of man, but rather confuſion of man, And there ſaidy ones a clerk in two verſis, What is better than Jaſper. wiſedom. And what is better than wiſedom, woman, and what is better than goody woman, no thing, And ſo ſir by many other reſons may ye ſee that many women been goody and their counceyll goody & prouffytable, And therfore yf ye wil truſte to my counceillyng I ſhal reſtore yolb your doughter hol and ſounde, And eke I wil doo ſo moche that ye ſhal haue honour in this caas, Whan Melleſee hady herdy the wordes of his wif Prudence, he sayde thus, I ſee wel that the worde of Salamon is ſoth, he ſaith that wordes that been ſpoken diſcretly by ordenance been honycombes for they yeue ſwetenes to the ſoule and holſomnes to the body, Be cauſe of thy ſwete wordes and eke for I haue aſſaiedy & preuydy thy grete ſapience and thy grete trouthe I wil gouerne me by thy counceill in alle maner thing, Lolb ſire ſaidy dame Prudence, fyn ye louche ſauf to be gouernedy be my counceyll I wil enforme yolb tolb ye ſhal gouerne yolb in chefinge of your counceyll, Firſt to fore alle werkis ye ſhalk beſeche

the knyght goon that he be your counceyll. And shewe yow
to suche entente that he yeue yow counceyll and comforte.
As Tholye taught his sonne. At alle tymes thou shalt
plese and praye hym to dresse thy weyes / And loke that
alle thy counceyll be in hym for euermore. Wayne Jame
eke saith / Yf ony of yow haue nede of sapience Aye hyt
of goon. And after that thay shalt ye take counceyll in
your self / And examyne Well your thoughtys of suche
thynges as ye thynke that ley leste for your prouffyt /
And thay shalt ye deyue alday from your hertes tho thyn
ges that ley contrarious to goon counceill / this is to saye
Ire / couetyse / and hastynes. First he that aweth counceyll
of hym self / Certes he muste be Withouten yre for many
causes / The fyrste is this that he that hath grete Ire and
Wrath in hym self / he Weneth alWay to do thingy that he
may not doo. And secondly he that is Iwous and Wrathfull may not deme Well / And he that may not deme Well
may not Well counceyll. Another is this / that he that is
Iwous and Wrathfull as saith seneke may not spekke but
blameful thinges / And With his Vicyous Wordes / he ste
reth other folke to anger and to Ire. And eke fyr ye
muste deyue couetyse out of your herte / For thapostle saith
that couetyse is the Rote of all harmes. And truste Well
that a couetous man ay not deme Well ne thynke but only
to fulfylle the ende of hys couetyse and certes that may
neuer be accomplysshed. For euermore the more haboun
dance a man hath of Richesse / the more he desyreth.
And ye muste also deyue out of your herte hastynes.

For certes ye may not deme for the beste hastely a sodeyn
thought that falleth in your herte/but ye muste auise yow
ony hit ful ofte/For as ye herde to fore the comyn prouerbe/
Whiche is this/he that sone demeth sone repenteth/Syre ye
be not alway in like disposicion/For certes somtyme/suche
thinges as semeth that is goody for to doo/Another tyme
hit semeth to yow the contrarye/Andy Whan ye haue take
counceill in your self & haue demedy by goody deliberacõn su
che thinges as semeth yow beste/Than I counceille yow to kepe
hit secrete/And bewreye not your counceyll to ony persone
but yf hit so be that ye wene sikerly/that thorugh your be
wreyng your condicion shal be to yow the more prouffytable/
For Jhesus syrak saith/neyther to thy frende/ne to thy
foo discouer not thy secrete counceyll/ne thy folye/For they
will yeue the audience/lokyng andy supportyng in your
presence/And scorne yow in your absence/Ay other clerk
saith that scarsely shal thou fynde ony persone that may
kepe counceyll secretly/The book saith Whilis that thou be
ste thy counceyll in thy herte/thou kepest hit in thy prison
Andy Whan thou bewreyest hit to ony wighte he holdeth the
in his snare/Andy therfore hit is better to hyde your coun
ceyll in your herte/than praye hym to whom ye haue bewreyd
your conceyll that he wole kepe it cloos & stille/For Seneca
saith/yf hit so be that thou ne may thy counceill hyde/Hold
durst thou praye ony other wighte to hyde thy counceyll andy
kepe hit secrete/But nathles yf thou wene sikerly that thy
bewreyng of thy counceyll to a persone will make thy
condicion stondery in the better plighte/than shal thou telle
hym thy counceyll as in this wise/First thou shalt make

no semblaūce whether they were lauer pres of werre or this
or that. ne shalle hym nó3t thy wyll ne thyn entente/ For
truste well that comunly these counceyllours ben flatterers
namely the counceyllours of grete lordes/ For they enforce
them alway rather to spekē plaisaūt wordes enclynyng to
the lordes luste/ than wordes that ben trewe and prouffitable
And therfore may sayn that the riche may hath selde whā
goody counceyll but yf he haue hit of hym selfe And after
that thou shalt considere thy frendes and thyn enmyes/ and
as touchyng thy frendes thou shalt considere whiche of hym
ben most trewe wiseste. most seykthfull. oldest and most ap
proued in counceyllyng And of hem shalt thou aye thy
counceyll as the case requyreth/ I saye firste that ye shal
clepe to your counceyll your frendes that ben trewe for Sala
mon saith right as the herte of a man delyteth in sauour
that is swete right so the counceyll of trewe frendes yeuth
swetnesse to the soule/ he saith also ther may no thyng be lik
nyd3 to a trewe frende. For certes gold3 ne siluer be not so
moche worth as the good3 wille of a trewe frend3 And eke he
saith that a trewe frende is a grete defence/ who that it findeth
certes he fyndeth a grete tresour/ Than shal ye eke vnder
stonde yf that your trewe frendes ben discrete & wyse/ for the
book saith/ Aye alway thy counceyll of hem that ben wyse.
And by this same reson shal ye clepe to your counceyll of
your frendes/ that ben of age whiche that haue seyn many
thynges and ben experte in diuerse thynges and ben apa
uid3 in counceyllyng/ For the book saith in old3 men is the
sapience and in longe tyme the prudence. And Tullius
Sayth/ That grete thynges ben not ay accomplysshed

by strengthe ne be deliuernes of body, but by counceill and by auctorite of psones & by science, the whiche thre thinges ne be not feble by age, but certes they enforce & encrece day by day. And thay shal ye kepe this for a general reule.

First shal ye clepe to your counceyll a felde of your frendes that ben specyall. For Salamon saith, Many a frende haue thou, but among a thousand chese the one to be thy counceyllour. For al be hit so that thou first telle thy counceyll to felde, thou maist after telle thy counceyll to mo folke yf hit be nede. But loke alway that thy counceillours haue tho thre condicions that I haue saidy before, that is to saye that they be trewe. Wise, and of oldy experience. And werke not alleway in euery nede by one counceillour allone. For somtyme hit behoueth to be counceylledy by many. For Salamon saith, Saluation of thinges is there where be many counceyllours. Now sith I haue toldy yow, of whiche folke that ye sholdy be counceilledy. Now wil I telle whiche counceyll ye shal eschewe. First ye shal eschewe the counceillyng of foles. For Salamon saith take no counceyll of a fool. For he ne can not counceylle but after his luste and his affection. The book saith that the properte of a fool is this He trobleth harme lightely of euery wight. And lightely troubleth all hymself. Ye shall also eschewe the counceyllyng of flaterars, suche as enforce hem rather to preyse your persone be flaterye, than to telle you the sothfastnes of thinges. Wherfore Tullius saith Among alle the pestelences that ben in frendship, the gretteste is flatterye. And therfore hit is more nede to eschewe and drede flaterers than ony other peple. The book saith thou shalt

for paraduenture they say more for drede than for loue/ Andy therfore saith a philosopher in this wise/ Ther is no knyght parfaytely trewe to hym that he fore dredeth/ Andy Tullius saith/ ther is no knyght so greet as an Emperour that longe may endure but yf he haue more loue of his peple than drede Thou shalt eschewe the counceyll of folkis that ben dronkelewe/ For they can no counceyll hyde/ For Salamon saith there is no pryuyte where as regneth dronkenes/ Ye shal alway haue in suspect suche folk as counceyll yow one thing pryuely and counceylle yow the contrary openly. Cassiodre saith that it is a maner sleight to hyndre/ Whan a-man schewith to doo one thinge openly & derkith the contrary pryuely/ Thou shalt also haue in suspeit the counceyllyng of wickedy folk/ For the book saith That the counceyll of wickedy folk is alwhay full of fraude. Andy dauid saith That blyssful is that man that hath not folowed the counceyll of wickedy folk/ Thou shalt also eschewe the counceyllyng of yongy folk for her counceyll is not rype.

NOw sire sith I haue schewed yow all this of whiche folk ye shal take your counceyll and of whiche folk ye shal eschewe their counceyll/ Now wole I telle yow how ye shal examyne your counceyll/ After the doctryne of Tullius In examynyng thy of your counceyllours ye shal cōsidere many thinges/ Alderfirst thou shalt considere that in that thing that thou art purposed and vpon what thing thou shalt haue counceyll that litel trouthe be said & conserued This is to saye/ telle all trewly thy tale/ For he that saith fals may not well be counceylled in that cas of the whiche he lieth/ Andy after this considere thre thinge that awaite

to that thou purpoſe ꝑ Firſt for to doo by thy counceyllours
yf reſon accorde therto. And yf ele yf thy myght may attayne
therto. And yf the more parte & the better parte of thy coun
ceillours accorde therto or no. Than ſhalt thou cõſidere what
thinge ſhall ſolowe of that conceillynge as hate. pees. warre
grace. prouffyt. or domage & many other thinges/ And of
alle theſe thinges thou ſhalt conſidere of what wete is engen
dryd the mater of thy counceyll And what fruyt it may
conceerne & engendryn. Thou ſhalt conſidere eke alle the cau
ſes from whens they be ſprongen And whan ye haue exami
ned your counceill as I haue ſaid & whiche parte is the better
and more prouffytable and haue approuyd by many wyſe
folke and olde Than ſhalt thou conſidere yf thou may per
fourme hit and make of hit a goody ende For reſon wolde
not that ony man ſholdy begynne a thinge but yf he might
ꝑfourme hit as hym ought/ ne noman ſholde take on hym
ſo heuy a charge that he myght not bere hit For the prouerbe
ſaith he that to moche embracheth diſtreyueth litylle And
Caton ſaith alſo Aſſaye to doo ſuche thinges as thou haſt
poiber to doo/ on leſſe that the charge oppreſſe the to ſore/ and
that the behoueth to weyue that thynge that thou haſt be
gonne. And yf that thou be in doubte whether thou may ꝑ
forme hyt or not/ Chese rather to ſuffre than to begynne.
and Peter alſons ſaith/ yf thou haſt might to doo a thinge
whiche thou muſte repente/ hit is better nay than ye/ this is
to ſaye that hit is better to holde thy tonge ſtille than for to
ſpeken/ Than maiſt thou vnderſtonde by ſtrenger reſons
That yf thou haſt poiber to ꝑforme a werke/ the whiche thou
ſhalt repente/ than it is better that thou ſuffre than begynne

thyn they that desendry euery wight to assaye a thinge of the whiche he is in doubte, whether he may performe it or noo And after whan ye haue examyned your counceylle as I haue saidy before̅ and knowe well that ye may performe your empryse, conferme hit thay sadly til it be at an ende.

Olbit is reson saidy she and tyme that I shelde yolb whan and wherfore that ye may chaunge your counsellours withoutey reproef, Soothly a man may change his counceille or his purpose yf the cause cesseth or whan an other cause begynneth For the lalbe vpon thinges that nedly betydey behoueth nedde counceylle. And Seneca saith Yf that thy counceylle come to the eris of wickedy men thyn enemyes, chaunge thy counceylle, Thou maist also chaunge thy counceylle yf so be that ther be erroure or thou fynde ony other cause harme or domage maye betyde, Also yf thy counceylle dishoneste or ellis cometh of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy counceylle For the lalbe saith that alle heresies that bey dishoneste beyn of no valewe, And elle yf so be that it be Impossible or may not goodly be performedy or kept, take this for a general reule that euery counceylle that is affermedy so strongly that it may not be changedy for no condition that may betide, I saye that ille counceylle is wickedy.

This Melleeus whan he herde the doctryne of his wif dame prudence he answerdy in this wise. Dame saidy he as yet in to this tyme ye haue couenably taught me as in general holb I shalle gouerne me in chesynge and withholdynge of my counceyllours. But nolb wolde I fayn̅ that ye wolde condescende espetyalle and telle me holb liketh or what semeth yolb be our counceyllours that we haue chosen

in our present nedes.

My lordy saidy she J beseche yolb in alle humblesse that ye Wil not Wilfully replye ayenste my reson/ne distempre your herte thoughe J speke thingy that you displese. For godi Woot that is not myn entente/ J speke hit for your leste. for your honour andy prouffyt eke And soothly J hope that your benignite Will take it in pacience/that your counceylle as in this cause ne sholdy not as to speke proply be callydy a counceillyngy but a monicion or a meuyngy folye/in Whiche counceylle ye haue erydy in thassemblyngy of your counceyl lours. For ye sholdy first haue clepedy a selbe folke to your counceylle And after that ye myght haue shewedy to moo folke yf hit hadi be nede But certes ye haue sodenly clepdy to your counceylle a grete multitude of peple ful chargeant andy ful anoyous for to here. Also ye haue erydy for there as ye shulde haue clepedy to your counceylle your trelbe frendes olde andy Wyse/ye haue clepedy strange folk. false and flateryers andy enemyes reconsiledy andy folk. that doy yolb reuerence Withoute loue. And also ye haue erydy for ye haue brought With yolb yre. couetyse & hastynes/the Whiche thre thinges bey contraryous to euery honest counceylle andy prouffitable/and Whiche thre thinges ye haue not amenused ne distroyedy neyther in yoiur self ne in your counceyllours as ye ought/ye haue erydy also for ye haue shewidy to your counceyllours your talent & your affection to make Warre anoy andy for to doo vengeance/ They haue aspyedy by your menyngy to What thingy ye be enclynedy/andy therfore haue they counceylledy yolb rather to your talente thay to your prouffit/ye haue erydy also for yolb semethy that it suffiseth

yolle to haue be counceylled be these counceyllours only and with lytill avise, where as in so grete nede and so hye, hié lady be necessarye mo counceyllours, And more deliberacõn to perfourme your empryse, ye haue erryd also for ye haue not examyned your counceylle in the forsaidn matter ne in delle manere as the cause requireth, ye haue erryd for ye haue made no deuysyon betwixe your counceyllours. This is to saye Betwene your frendes and your feynedn counceyllours, ne ye haue not knolle the wille of your frendes olde and wyse But ye haue caste alle her wordes in any huckepot, and enclinedn your herte to the more part and to the gretter nombre and be yolle condescendedn, And also ye wote welle that men shulle alway fynde a gretter parte of nombre of fooles than of wise men. And therfore the counceyls that been at congregations and multitude of folke there as men takeñ more rewardn to the nombre than to the sapience of psones Ye see wel that in suche counceyllynges foles haue the maistrye.

Melleheus answerdn agayn I graunte welle I haue erryd, but there as thou hast tolde me here beforn that he is not to blame that changeth his counceylle in certeyn cas and for certeyn Juste causes, I am al redy to chaunge my counceyllours right as thou liste and as thou wilte deuyse, The prouerbe saith that for to doo synne is mannysshe But certes for to perseuere longe in synne it is a werke of the deuyll.

To this sentence answerdn dame prudence and sayde Examyne your counceylle and lete vs see whiche of hem haue spoken most resonable & taughte yolle best counceille

And for as moche as the examynacion is necessarie late vs
begynne at surgiens & at phisicyens that first spekey in this
mater/ I saye yow that ỳ surgyens & the phisicians haue saidy
yow discretly as they ought For they saide ful wisely/ that
to the office of hem hit appertayneth to doo to euery wight ho
nour & prouffit/ & no wight to enuoye And after their craft
do grete diligence vnto the cure of hem the whiche they haue in
gouernãce And syre right as they haue answerdy wisely &
discretly/ right so I rede yow that they be highly & souereinly
gerdonedy for her noble speche. And eke for they sholde do
the more ententyf besynes in the curacion of your doughter.
For al be it so that they be your frendes Therfore shal ye not
suffre that they shal serue yow for nought. But ye ought
to guerdone hem & shewe hem largesse. And as touchyng
that the phisicyens encresidy in this cas that is to saye that
in maladies one cõtrarie is warisshidy by another cõtrarie I
wolde fayn knowe how ye vnderstode that texte & what is your
sentence/ Certes saidy Melleleus I vnderstande that in this
wise/ that right as they haue do me a cõtrarious right/ right
so sholde I do hem another. For right as they haue vengedy
hem on me & don me wronge/ right so sholdy I venge me on
hem & do hem wronge & thay haue I auredy one contrarie by an
other contrarie/ Lo saidy dame prudence how lightly is euery
man enclynedy to do his owen desire & his owen plaisance/ cer
tes saidy she the wordes of the phisicyens sholdy not be vnder
stande in this wise For certes wickednes is not contrariousy to
wickednes/ ne vengeance to vengeance ne wronge to wronge
but euerych of hem encresidy & aggreggith other/ But certes
the wordes of the phisicyens sholdy be vnderstande in this wise

For goody and Wickednes be thy contrarynes / and pees and warre / vengeance and suffraunce / and discorde and accords / and many other thinges / But certes Wickednes shal be warefful by goodnes / and discorde be accorde and warre be pees. and so forth be other thinges. And herto accordeth saynt Poule thapostle in many places / he saith yelde not harme to harme ne Wicked speche to Wicked speche But do Wel to hym that doth the harme and blysse hym that saith the harm / And in many other places he saith and amonesseth pees and accorde. But nold Wole I speke to yold of the counceyll Whiche that Was yeue to yold by the men of lalde and Wise folke that saiden alle by one accorde as ye haue herde / that ouer alle thinges ye shold do diligence to kepe your persone and to Warnestore your holds. And saiden also that in this caas ye oughte for to Werken ful aduysedly and With grete discretion and deliberation. And syre as to the first point that toucheth the keping of your persone ye shal vnderstande that he that hath warre Shal euermore deuoutly and mekely beseken and prayen before alle thinges Jhesu Crist of his mercy that he Wole haue hym in his protection & be his souereyn helper at his nede. For certes in this Werke eyer is no Wighe that may be counceylled ne kepte sufficiently Without the keping of our lord Jhesu crist / To this entente accordeth the pphete dauid that saith / yf god ne kepe the Cyte / in yelle Waketh he that kepeth hit / Nold syre than shul ye cõmytte the keppyng of your persone to your trelde frendes that bey y prouedy and knoldey And of them shalle ye aye helpe your persone to kepe. For Cathon saith Yf thou haue nede of helpe / aye hit

of thy frende. And after this thay shal ye kepe yow from alle straunge folkes and yeu lyeres & haue alway in suspēt the compayne. For Peter Alfons saith / Me takke no com payne by the Waye of straunge men / but yf hit so be that thou haue knowen hem before tyme / and yf so be that ye haue not knowen hym / And Wil nedes falle in thy compayne paun ture Withoute thyn assente / enquere thay as subtilly as þ canst or maist of his conuersation & of his lyf before. and fayne thy Wayē and saye that thou Wilt go theder as thou Wolt not goo / & yf he bere a spere holde the on the right syde And yf he bere a Swerd holde the lyfte syde / & after thus thay shal ye kepe you Wisely from alle suche maner pple as I haue saidē before & hem & her counceill eschelue. And after this thay shal ye kepe you in suche maner that for ony pre sumpcōn of your strengthe / that ye ne dispyse ne attempte not the might of your aduisarye / and thus beWare that ye lette not the kepinge of your pſone for ony pſumpcion For every Wise man dredeth his enemye. And Salamon saith Wilful is he that of no thinge hath drede For certes he that thorugh þ hardynes of his herte or of hym self hath to grete pſumpcion / hym shal ayl betyde / thay shal ye euermore com trelWaye embuſſhementis in special. For Seneke saith the Wise man that dredeth harmes / eschelWeth harmes / ne he fal leth in no peryll that peryll eschelWeth. And al be hyt so that thou seme that thou be in sylier place / yet shalt thou to alleWay diligence in kepinge of thy persone / not only from thy grettest enemyes but from the leste enemye. Ouyde sayth / That the lytyl Wespe Wole sle a grete hole and the grete herte / And the book sayth / That a lytyl thorn

may pryche the kynge fayll sore. Wndy ay hounde Wyll ſle
the Wylde boor/ But natheles J saye not that thou ſhalt be
ſo coward that thou doubte/ Where as is no drede/ The booke
ſaith that ſom folke haue grete luſte to deſtroye But yet
they dredey hem to be diſcryued. Thou ſhalt drede to be en-
poyſoned/ Wndy kepe the from the compayny of ſlorneres.
For the booke ſaith With ſcorners make no compayne/ but
ſle her Wordes as venym/ Wolde as to the ſeconde poynt/ Where
as your Wyſe counceyllours counceylled yow to Warneſtore
your hous With grete diligence J Wolde fayn knowe howe ye
vnderſtonde the Wordes & What is the ſentence. Melleleus
anſwerde and sayde/ Certes J vnderſtande hit in this Wiſe
that J ſhal Warneſtore my holds With tolbres ſuche as be ar-
tillis and other maner edifices With armure and other
maner artyllerye by ſuche thinges Whiche J may my ſelfe
and my hous ſo defendey that myy enemyes ſhall be in drede
my hous for tapproche.

To this ſentence anſwerde anoy prudence/ Warneſto-
reyng fairy ſhe of grete tolbres and edifices With
grete coſtages and grete trauayll/ Wndy Wham that they
be accompliſſhidy yet ley they not Worth a ſtrabe/ but yf they
ley defendey be trebe frendes that ley olde and Wiſe/ Wndy
vnderſtonde Well that the gretteſt and ſtrengeſt garyſon
that a ryche man may haue as Wel to kepe his perſone as
his goody is that he be beloudy With his ſubgettes & With
his neyghbours. For thus ſaith Tullius That ther is a
maner garyſon that noman may vaynquiſſhe ne diſcomfyte
Wndy that is a lordy to be beloudy of his Cytezeyns and
of his peple. Wolde ſyr as to your thirdy poynt/ Where as

your wyse & olde counceillours saide that ye ne ought not so sodenly ne hastely to procedery in this nede/but that ye oughten to purueye & apparaillen in this cace with grete diligence and grete deliberation trewly I trowe they saiden right wel sely and right soth. For Tullius saith In euery nede er thou begynne/yet apparaylle the with grete diligence/Thus saith than in vengeance takyng in warre in batayll and in warnestoryng er thou begynne I rede that thou apparaylle ȳ therto and doo hit with grete deliberation. For Tullius sayeth that longe apparaylyng before the batayll maketh short victorye And Cassiodre saith/that the garison is ȳ strenger whan hit is longe tyme aduysed. But nowe late vs speke of the counceyll that was accorded be your neyghbours suche as doo yow reuerence withouten loue/your olde enemyes reconsiled/your flatterers that counceylle yow ententeyn thinges openly/and pryuely counceylle yow the contrary. The yongh folk that counceylle you to auenge you and make warre anon. Certes syre as I haue saidy before ye haue gretly erredy to haue cleped suche maner of folk to your counceyll/Whiche counceyllours ben ynough reproeuyd afore saidy by reson/But natheles late vs nowe descende to the specyalle/ye shal first procede after the doctryne of Tullius. Certes the trouth of thys matere or of thys counceyll needeth not dyligently enquyre. For it is wist well whyche they be that haue doy to yow thys trespaas and dolorye and how many trespassours/and in what maner that they haue doo to yow alle this wronge & alle this dolorye And after this shal ye examyne the secondy condicoñ Whiche that the same Tullius adeth in this same matr.

For Tullius putteth a thing, whiche that he calleth consentinge. This is to saye, whether they and whiche they holde many consentein to this counceylle in thy wilfulnes to doo hasty vengeance. And lete consydere also who be they and holde many be they that consenteden to your aduersaries. And certes as to the first poynt it is wel knowen whiche folke they be that consenteden to your hasty wilfulnes. For certes alle tho that counceylleden you to make sodeyn warre be not youre frendes. Lete vs nowe consydere whiche be they that ye holden so gretly your frendes as to your persone. For al be hit so that ye be so myghty and riche. Certes ye be but allone. For ye haue no childe but a doughter. Ne ye haue no brethern ne cosyns germains ne none other myghe kynrede. Wherfore that your enemyes for drede holden stynte to plete with yow or destroyen your ysone. Ye knowe also that your ryches muste be dispended in dyuerse parties. And whan that euery wighte hath his parte they ne wil take but lityl reward to lengen your deth. But youre enemyes ben thre and they haue many children, brethern, cosyns and other myghe kynrede. And though so were that thou hadest slayn two or thre of hem, yet dwelleth there ynough to wreken her deth and to sle thy persone. And though so be that your kynrede be more syker and stedfast than the kynrede of your aduersaries, yet natheles your kynrede nys but after kynrede, they be but lityl subget to you. And the kynrede of your enemyes ben nygh sible to hem. And certes as in that her condition is better than youris. Than lete vs considere also yf that the counceyle of hem that counceylle yow to take sodeyn vengeance whether hit accorde to

reson or no/ and certes ye knolle wel nay For as by right or reson ther may noman take vengeance on no wight but the Juge that hath ꝑ Jurisdiction of hit/ whan hit is graunted hym to take that vengeance hastely or tempatly as the lawe requireth And yet more ouer of that word that Tullius saith & clepeth consentynge/ thou shalt considere yf thy myght & thy power may consende & suffyse to thy wilfulnes & to thy counceillours And certes thou maist wel saye nay For sikerly as for to spelle properly we may do no thinge. but only suche thynges as we may do ryghtfully. And certes thou maist rightfully take no vengeance/ as of your propre auctorite. Than maye ye see that your power ne consenteth ne accordeth your wylfulnes/ Lete vs examyne the thirde poynt that Tullius clepeth consequent/ thou shalt vnderstande that the vengeance that thou purposest to take is consequent. And therof folowdeth another vengeance. peryll and ware and other dōmages wythoute nombre. of whiche we be not ware as at this tyme. and as touchinge the fourth parte that / Tullius clepeth engendrynge/ Thou shalt consydere that thys wronge whiche is doy to the/ is engendrydy of the hate of thyn enemyes & of vengeance taklynge vpon hem that wole engendre another vengeance and moche sorowe & wastynge of ryches as I saidy before. Now syre as to the fyfthe poynt. whiche that Tullius clepeth/ causes/ whiche is the last poynt/ Thou shalt vnderstande that Ilke wronge that thou hast receyuyd hath certeyn causes whiche that clerkes clepen. orient and efficiens and causa longinqua & causa propinqua/ this is to saye the fer cause & the

nyghe cause/ The fex cause is almyghty godȝ that is cause of alle thynges/ The nere cause is thȝ thre enemyes/ The cause accidental was hate/ The cause material Js the. v. Wounder of thȝ doughter/ The cause formal is the cause of her Wrechyngȝ that broughten ladders and clombȝ in at the Wyndowes. The cause fynall was to sle thȝ doughter hit lettedȝ not in as moche as in hem was/ But for to speke of this fynal cause as to what ende they shal come/ or what shal fynallȝ betyde of hem in this cas/ ne can J not deme But by conietyngȝ and supposyngȝ/ For we shal suppose that they shal come to a wickedȝ ende/ be cause that the book of the decrees sayth. Selde or with grete pyne be causes brought to a goodȝ ende/ whan they be badly begonne/ Wold sire yf mey Woldȝ aye me Why that godȝ suffreth mey to do this Wilonye/ Certes J can not Wel answere as for no sothfastnes. For thapostle saith. That the secrete and the Jugementes of our lordȝ godȝ almighty ben full depe Ther may no man cõprehende ne serche hem sufficiantly/ Nathles by certayn pfumptions and conietyngȝ J holde and bileue That Wight that is ful of Justice and rightfulnes hath suffridȝ this to betyde be Juste cause and resonable. Thȝ name is Melleie/ This is to saye a man that drynkethȝ honȝ/ thou hast dronkenȝ so moche honȝ of swete temporel ryches & delices of honour of this worldȝ that thou art dronke and hast forgotenȝ Jhesu crist thȝ creatour/ Thou ne hast doȝ to hym suche honour & reuerence as thou oughtest/ ne thou ne hast Wel takenȝ kepe of the Wordes of Ouyde that saith Vnder the honȝ of the goodes of the bodȝ is hidȝ venyn that sleeth the soule/ Andȝ Salamon saith Yf thou hast founde

hongrete of hit that suffryseth. For yf thou ete of hit out of mesure/thou shalt spelle/and be nedy and poure And yet nethelesse Crist hath the in despyte/and hath towned away fro the his face and his mercy/ And also he hath suffryd that thou hast be purysshed in the maner that thou hast trespassed/ Thou hast don synne agayn our lord Jhesu crist. For ertes the thre enemyes of mankynde that is to saye the flesshe the fende and the worlde thou hast suffryd hem for to entre in to thy herte wilfully by the wyndowes of thy body. And hast not defended thy self sufficyently agaynst her assaultes and her temptacions/ so that they haue wounded thy soule in fyue places this is to saye/ the dedely synnes that hem entrid in to thy herte be thy fyue wyttes. And in thys maner our lord Jhesu Crist hath suffryd that thy thre enmyes hem entryd in to thy hous by the wyndowes. And haue wounded thy doughter in the maner aforesaid.

Certes sayd Melebe J see well that ye enforce yow myghyl by wordes to ouercome me in suche maner as J shal not venge me of myn enemyes Ye dyng me the pryse & the ayse that myght befalle of this vengeance/ But who so wold considere in alle vengeances the peryll & the ayse that might selde of vengeance takyng/ a man wold neuer take vengeance/ & that were harme/ for by vengeance taking hem wicked men dissenerd from the good men And they that haue wil to do wickednes restreyne her wicked purpos whan they see the punysshyng & the chastysing of the trespassours. And yet saye J more/ that right as by synguler pfumpcion he symeth in taking vengeance of another man

Pighe so symeth the Juge yf he take not ande to vengeance on hem that hit haue deserued. Seneke saith thus/ That maister he saith is goode that vepeneth hym selfe his Ande euel foode sayeth a man dredeth to doo outrageously Whan he woot & knoweth that it displeseth the Juges & soueraynes Ande another saith The Juge that dredeth to do right maketh hym selfe his. Ande saint Poule thapostle saith holde he writeth to the romayns that the Juges bere not the spere without cause But they bere hit to punysshe the shrewes and myssoers/ Ande for to defende the goode men/ yf ye wole take vengeance on your enemyes ye shal retourne and haue your cours to the Juge that hath the Jurisdiction vpon hem and ye shalle punysshe hem as the lawe axeth & requyreth

Thus saide Melleke this vengeance liketh me nothing I bethinke me nowe and take hede howe that fortune hath norysshed me fro my childhode and holpe me to passe many a straunge paas/ Nowe wole I assaye in her trouthe with goddes helpe that shal me saue for to venge/ Certes sayde Prudence yf ye wil werke be my counseyll ye shal not assaye fortune by no waye/ ne ye shal not lene ne holde vnto her after the worde of seneke/ For thinges that ley slily on and that be doon in hope of fortune shal neuer come to goode ende/ Ande as to the same seneke saith the more clere ande the more shynynge that fortune is/ the more brotyl & the sonner broken she is/ Truste ye not in her For eke nys no stedfastnes ne stablenes in her For whan thou trowest to be most sure ande syker of her/ she wil sayle & deceyue the Ande where as ye sayn that fortune hath norysshed you in your childhode/ I saye that ther is so mykyll the lasse truste

in youre wytte. For Seneke sayth What may that is nowe
shoon by fortune she maketh hym a fool/Wolle sieth ye desyre
to haue vengeance/And yf the vengeance that is doo after the
lawe & before the Juge lyketh not youw/And yf the vengeance
that is doo in hope of fortune is perylous & vnsurteyne/than
haue ye no remedye but for to haue youre recours vnto the so
uerayn Juge that vengeth all vilonyes & wronges/And he
shal venge youw after that hym self witnesseth where as he
sayth/leue ye the vengeance vnto me and I shal do hit.

Melebe answerd yf I venge me not of the vilonnye
that men haue doo vnto me I somone and warne hem
that haue doo to me this vilonye and alle other to do me
vilonye/For it is wreton yf thou takest noo vengeance of
ay olde vilonye/thou somonest thyn aduersarye to doo the a
nelbe vilonye/Also for my sufferaunce men wold me so
grete vilonye that I myght not leue hit ne susteyne hit/&
than shold I be put and holde ouer lowe. For men sayn in
myldyl suffrynge shal many thinges falle vnto the whiche
thou ne shal nolde suffre.

Certes sayd dame prudence I graunte youw well that
ouer mocke sufferaunce is not good/But yet hit fol
lowith not therof that euery ysone to whom men do vilonye
to take of hit vengeance For that appertayneth & longeth
al onely to the Juges. For they shal venge the vilonyes &
the Iniuryes/And therfore the two auctoritees that ye haue
sayd to fore ben alonely vnderstonde in ỳ Juges For whan
ye suffre ouer many wronges & vilanyes to be doo with
outen punyssh̄inge they semen not a may to do only nelle
wronges/but they cõmanden hym & bidden hym to do symi-

And the souerayns & the Juges in their courte so mykyll
suffre of the thrallles & myscreers, that they shulde by suche
sufferaunce and by proces of tyme wexen of suche power &
myght that they shulde put out the Juges & the souerayns
from their places, and at laste to make hym to lese her lord
shyp But lete vs nowe put that, that ye haue leue to lenge
I saye ye be not of myght ne power as nowe to lenge yowe
For yf ye wil make comparison vnto the myght of your
aduersaryes, ye shal fynde in many thynges that I haue
sayde yow or this, that her condition is better than youres
And therfore say I that it is good as nowe that ye suffre
and be pacyent. Furthermore ye knowe well that after
the comen sawe, hit is a wodenes to a man to stryue with
a more mighty man than he is hym self And for to stryue
with a man of euen strengthe, that is to saye with a man
that is as strong as hym self, hit is grete peryll. And
for to stryue with a weyker than hym, hit is folye. And
therfore sholde a man ble stryuyng as mykyl as he myghte
For Salamon saith Hit is a grete worshyp to a man to
kepe hym fro noyse and stryf And yf so happe that a man
of gretter myght and strengthe than thou arte doo the gre
uance, Studye and besye the rather to stynte the same gre
uance, than for to lenge For seneke saith That he putteth
hym in grete peryll that stryueth with a gretter man than
he is hym self. And Cathon saith That yf a man of hyer
estate or degre or of more myght than thou art doo the anoye
or greuance suffre hym, For he that ones hath greuyd the
maye another tyme releue the and helpe the, yet set I caas
that ye haue a licence for to lenge yowe, yet ought ye to en-

hers to all these thinges afore said & that ye take vengeance
For I saye that ther be ful many thinges that shal restrayn
yoll of vengeance takyng & make yoll for tenckyne to suf
fer & to haue pacience in the wronges that haue be don. First
and forward & yf ye will consydre the defaltes that be in
your owen ysone. For whiche defaltes god hath suffred
yoll to haue alle thys tribulation as I haue sayd before to
yoll. For the poete saith, That we ought ben pacientli to
take the tribulations that comen to vs, whan we thinke &
consydre that we haue deseruyd to haue them. And sayne
Gregory saith, that whan a man considereth well the nom
bre of his defautes & synnes, the paynes & tribulations that
he suffreth semen the lasse to hym And in as moche as hym
thinketh his synnes more heuy and greuous in so moche
semeth his pryne more lighter and esyer to hym, Also ye
ought ben tenckyne & bolde your herte to take the pacyence of
our lord Jhesu Crist as saith sayne Peter in his epistlis
Jhesu Crist he saith that suffreth for vs & yaf ensample to
euery man to folowe and sue hym, for he dide neuer synne
Ne neuer cam ther out of his mouth vileyns word, whan
men cursed hym, he cursed hem not, And whan men beten
hym, he manassed hem not. Also the grete pacyence that
sayntes whiche that ben in paradyse haue had in tribulati
ons that they haue suffryd whythouten her deserte or gylt
ought moche stire your pacience Forye sholden enforce yoll to
haue pacience, Considerynge the tribulations of this world
but litel while endureth and sone passyd & goon, And
the Joye that a man seketh by pacyence in trybulacions is
perdurable, After that the Apocalips saith in his epistle.

the Joye of godd he saith is pdamille that is to saye euer
lastynge Also to olde ye Wel and the bokes stedfastly that
he is not Wel norysshed ne Wel taughte that Wil not haue
pacience ne Wil not vexeue pacience. For Salamon saith
That the doctryne of a man and the Witte is knowen he pa
cient And in another place he saith that he that is pacient
gouerneth hym by grete prudence. & the same salamon saith
The angry and the Wrathful man maketh noyses And
the pacient man attemprith hym and stilleth hym / he saith
also / hit is more Worth to be pacyent than for to be ryght
stronge / And he that may haue the lordship of hes owen
herte is more to preyse / than by his force or strengthe taketh
grete cytees And therfore saith saynt Jame in his epistle
That pacience is a grete vertue of perfection. Certes saide
Melibe I graunte dame prudence that pacience is a grete vertu
of pfection but euery man may not haue the perfection that
ye seke / ne I am none of that nombre of right parfight men
For my herte may neuer be in pees vnto the tyme that hit
be venged And al be hit so that hit Was grete paryll to
my enemyes to doo me a vilonye in takynge vengeance
vpon me Yet tolde they no hede of the paryll but fulfylled
their Wicked Will and corage / And therfore me thynketh
men ought not to vexeue me / though I put me in a litell
paryll for to venge me / And though I doo a grete exesse
That is to saye that I a venge one outrage by another.
Saide dame Prudence ye saye your Wil as you liketh
But in no caas of the Worlde a man ought not to
outrage ne exesse for to venge hym For assirodee saith that
as ayl doth he that a vengeth hym by outrage as he that

deth the outrage And therfore ye shal lerne yow after the
doctr of right/that is to saye by the lawe/and not by your
me by outrage And also yf ye will lerne you of the ou-
trage of your aduersaryes in other maner/ye syme/And
therfore saith Senek/that a man shal neuer lerne shrewd-
nes by shrewdnes/and yf that ye saye that right axeth a
man to defende violence by violence and fightyng by figh
tyng/Certes ye saye soth. What the defence is don and
without entermyt or without taryeng or delaye for to
defende hym and not forto lerne hym. And yet behoueth
that a man put suche temperance in hys defence that men
haue no cause ne mater to reproche hym that defendeth hym
of outrage or of excesse. For ellys were it agayn reson.
Parde ye knowe well that ye make no defence as now for
to defende yow/but for to lerne yow/and so fareth it that
ye haue no will to do your will attemperatly. And ther-
fore me thynketh that pacyence is good. For Salamon
sayth/That he that is not pacyent shal haue grete harm.

CErtes said Melebe I graunte yow that what a man
is impacient and wroth of that whiche towcheth hym
not/it that appertayneth not to hym/though hit harme hym
it is no wonder For the lawe saith that he is culpable that
entermeteth or medleth of thyng that appertayneth not
to hym. And Salamon sayth/That he that enterme-
teth hym of the noyse of stryf of another man/is lyke to
hym that taketh a strange hound by the eerys. For right
as he that taketh a strange hounde by the eerys/he is other-
while byten with the hound/right in the same wyse/it is
reson that he haue harme that by hys Impacyence medleth

hym of the noyse of another may whan as hit appertayneth
not to hym. But ye knowe well that this ode that is to
saye my grief and my desire toucheth me right nygh/and
therfore though I be weth and impacient it is no meruayll
And sauyng your grace I can not see that I sholde greatly
harme me though I toke vengeance/ For I am richer and
more mighty than myn enemyes ben & it is wel knowen that
by money and hauyng grete possessions ben al thinges of
this worldy gouernedy. And also salamon saith that alle
thise thinges obeyen to moneye. Whan prudence had herde
her husbonde a vaunte hym of his ryches & of his moneye
dispreysyng the power of his enemyes she spacke and saidy
in this wise/ Certes dere syre I graunte you that ye be riche
and myghty/and that riches ben goody to hym that haue
goten hem well and that wel can vse them/ For right as
the body of a man may not lyue without the soule/nomore
may the lyf without temporel goodes And by richesse may
a man gete hym grete frendes/ And therfore saith pamphi
lus yf an erles doughter be riche he saith she may chese of a
thousandy men whom she wil take to her husbonde. For of
a thousandy men one wil not forsake her And this pam
philes saith also yf that thou be right happy that is to saye
yf thou be riche thou shalt fynde a grete nombre of felaws
and frendes. and yf thy fortune change sauelde frendship
and felawshyp for thou shalt be allone without ony com
pany/ but yf hit be the company of poure folk. And yet
saith this pamphilus more ouer/ that they that ben bonde &
thral of lignage shulle be made worthy & noble by richesse.
And right so as by richesse ther comen many goodes/ right

so by pouerte that comen many harmes & enylles And therfore dispeth assoone pouerte the moder of ruyne/that is to saye the moder of outerthrowynge or of fallynge doun And therfore saith Peter alfons/one of the greteste auersitees of thys worldy is When a freman of kynde or of birthe is constreyned be pouerte to ete the almesse of hys enemye. And the same saith Innocence in one of his bookes that sorowfull and myshappy is the condicion of a poure beggar For yf he aye not his mete/he dyeth for hunger. And yf he aye he dieth for shame/and algate necessite constreyneth hym to aye. And therfore saith Salamon That better it is to dye than to haue suche pouerte. And as the same salamon saith better it is to dye a bitter deth than to lyue suche a lyf/Be thyse resons that I haue said vnto you and by many other that I coude say I graunte that richesse ben goody to hem that gete hem well & to tho that vse well thys richesse And therfore wole I shewe you/how ye shal behaue you in gadrynge of your richesse/and in what maner ye shal vse them First ye shal gete hem without grete desyre/by goody leyzer softynghy and not ouer hastely. For a man that is to desiringe in getynge riches haboundeth hym first to theffte and to alle other myscheefes And therfore saith salamon he that hasteth hym to resily to weye ryche he shal be none Innocent/he saith also that the ryches that hastely cometh to a man/soone and hastely goeth and passeth from a man But that riches that cometh lityll & a lityll weyeth alway and multeplieth And therfore ye shal gete riches by your witte and by your trauayll vnto your prouffit/and that without ony wronge & harme doyng to ony other ysone.

For the lawe saith ther maketh noman hym self ryche yf
he do harme to another wighe, this is to saye that nature
defendeth and forbedeth by wighe that no man make hym
ryche vnto the harme of any other persone. And Tullius
saith that no sorowe ne drede of deth ne of thinge that may
befalle vnto man is so moche agayn nature as a man to
procure his owen prouffit to the harm of any other man. and
though that grete & myghty men gete riches more lightely
than thou, yet shalt thou not be ydle But shewe to do thy
prouffyt. For thou shalt in alle wise fle ydlenes. For sala
mon saith That he that trauaylleth in ydlenes techeth a
man to do many euyllys And the same Salamon saith
He that traueilleth and besieth hym to tyle his londe shal
ete brede. and he that is ydle & casteth hym to no besynes
ne occupation shal falle in to pouerte and dye for hunger.
And he that is ydle and slowe can neuer fynde conuenable
tyme for to do his prouffyt For ther is a scripture saith.
That the ydle man excuseth hym in wynter be cause of the
grete colde and in somer by encheson of hete. For these cau
ses saith Catho Maketh and enclineth yow. not ouer my
kyll to slepe. For ouermoche reste norissheth and causeth
many vices. And therfore saith saynt Jerome, doth some
good dedes that the deuyll whiche that is your enemye fynde
you not vnoccupyed. For the deuyll taketh not lightely to
his wrechinge suche as he fyndeth occupied in goode werke
Thay thus in getynge of ryches ye muste fle ydlenes. and
afterward ye shalle vsen the ryches whiche ye haue goten
by your witte and by your trauayll in suche maner that
men holde yow not to scarse ne to sparynge ne to foll large

that is to saye euer lyuyng a spendar. ¶ For ryght as may
blame ay auerycyous may be cause of his scarsenes and
chyncherye / in the same wyse is he to blame that spendeth
ouer largely. ¶ Andy therfore Caton saith Use thy riches
that thou hast goten in suche maner as men haue no ma-
tere ne cause to saye ne calle the neyther wrecche ne chynche
For it is a grete shame to a man to haue a poure herte and
a riche purs He sayth also the goodes that thou hast goten
Use hem be mesure that is to saye spende them mesurably.
For they that folily spendyn and wasteyn the goodes that
they haue / whan they haue nomore propre of theyr owen / they
shapen hem to take the goodes of other men. ¶ I saye than
that ye shal flee auarycye vsyng your riches in suche ma-
nere that men saye not that your ryches is deuoured / but
that ye haue hem in your myght and in your wel dyng.
For the wise man repreuyth the auarycious man and saith
thus in two versis Wherto and why burieth a man his
owen goodes be his grete auarycye and knowyth wel that
nedes muste he dye. ¶ For deth is the ende of euery man as
in thys present lyf. ¶ And for what cause and encheson
Joyneth or knytteth he hym so faste to hys goodes / that
alle his wyttes mowe not dysseuere ne departe hym from
his goodis. ¶ And knowyth wel or ought to knowe that
whan he is dede / he shal nothyng leue wyth hym out of
this world. ¶ And therfore sayth seynt Augustyn. that
the auerycyous man is lykened vnto helle / that the more
hit swalowyth the more it desireth to swolowe and to de-
youre / ¶ And as wel as ye wolde eschewe to be called an
auarycyous man or a chynche / as wel sholde ye kepe you

and gouerne yolle in ſuche wiſe that men clepe yolle not ſolle large. Therfore ſaith Tullius/ The goodes of thyn houſe ſholde not be hid ne kept ſo cloos but that they myghte be opende be pyte and be debonairte/ that is to ſaye to yeue hem parte that haue grete nede. Ne thy goodes ſholde not be ſo open to be euery mannes goodes/ Afterward in getyng of your richeſſe and diſpyng hem ye ſhall alway haue thre thinges in your herte. That is to ſaye our lorde gode. goode conſcience. and goode name. Firſt ye ſhal haue gode in your herte. and for no riches ye ſhal do no thing whiche may in ony maner wiſe diſpleſe gode that is our creatour & maker After the worde of ſalamon/ hit is better to haue a litil good with the loue of gode than for to haue moche golde & treſour and to leſe the loue of his lorde gode. And the prophete ſaith that better it is to be a goode man & haue litil goode and treſour/ than to beholden a ſhrewe & haue grete richeſſe And yet ſaye I furthermore that ye ſhal alway do youre beſynes to gete you riches ſo that ye gete hem with goode conſcience. And the appoſtle ſaith that ther nys no thing in this worlde of whiche we ſhal haue ſo grete Joye as whan our conſcience berith vs goode witnes And the wiſe man ſaith that the ſubſtance of a man is ſul goode whan ſynne is not in mannes conſcience. Afterward in getyng of your rycheſſe and in diſpyng of them ye muſte haue grete beſynes and diligence that your goode name be alway kept and conſerued. For Salamon ſaith That better is and more it availleth a man for to haue a goode name than for to haue many riches. And therfore he ſaith in an other place/ do grete diligence in keepyng of thy frende and in

beryng of the goody name. For hit shal lenger abide with the than ony other tresour be it neuer so precyous. And ne tes he sholdy not be called a gentyl may that after goody & goody conscience alle thinges lefte ne doth to kepe his goody name. And cassiodre saith that it is signe of a gentil herte whan a may loueth & desireth to haue a goody name. And therfore saith saynt Augustyn, that ther be two thinges y be necessarye & nedefull, that is goody conscience & goody loos And he that trusteth hym so mikyl in his goody conscience that he despiseth & setteth at nought his goody name or loos he doth not wel. For he that reketh not to kepe his goody name nys but a cruel chorle. Syre nolb haue I shewed yolb holb ye sholdy doo in getingy of riches & holb ye sholdy vse hem And I see wel that for the trust that ye haue in your riches ye wole meue warre & bataille I conseille yolb that ye begynne no warre in truste of your riches For they suffise not warres to maintene. And therfore saith a philosophre, that may that desireth algate & wil haue warre shal neuer haue suffysaunce. For the richer that he is the gretter dispense muste he make yf he wil haue worshyp & victorye. And salamon saith That the gretter riches that a may hath the more dispence he hath. And therfore al be hit so that he fortune & riches ye may haue many folke, yet behoueth it not ne it is not goody to begynne warre, where that ye may haue in other maner pees vnto your worshyp and prouffyt. For the victoryes that bey of bataille in this worlde, bey not in grete nombre and multitude of peple ne in fertu of may, but hit lyeth in the wylle and in the honde of our lordy Jhesu body al; maghty. And therfore Judas machabeus whiche that was

godens knyghte. Whan he shold fighte agaynste his aduerse
ryes that hadd a gretter nombre and gretter multitude of
pple and strenger than was the pple of Machabee, yet he
nsorted his litel pple and said right in this wyse
also lightely said he may our lord god yeue victorye to
a selde folk as to many folke. For the victory of a batail
cometh not by a grete nombre of pple but hit cometh from
our lord god of heuen And dere sire for as moche as ther
is noman certayn that he be worthy that god wole yeue hym
victory or not. Salamon saith. Therfore euery man shold
gretly drede warris to begynne and be cause that in batail
falle many parels And happeth otherwhile that also soone
is a grete man slayn as a litil man. And as is wreton
in the seconde book of kynges, the dedes of batail ben aven
turous and no thing certayn. For as lightely is one hurte
with a spere as an other. And for ther is grete peryll in
warre therfore shold a man eschewe and flee warre in as
mykyll as a man may goodly. For Salamon sayth He
that louyth peryll shal falle in peryll. After that dame
prudence had spaken in this mater Melibee answerd and
sayde I see wel dame prudence that by fair wordes and by
your resons that ye haue shewed me, that warre liketh you
no thyng, but I haue not herde yet in this counceyll, how I
shal do in this nede. Certes said she I counceylle yow that
ye accorde with your aduersaryes that ye haue pes with hem
For saynt Jame saith in his epistlis That by accorde and
pes the smale riches wexe grete And by debate & discorde
the grete richesse falleth doun and failleth. And ye knowe
wel that one of the gretteste and most soudrayn thyng

that be in this World is envye and pees. And therfore
sayth our lord Jhesu Crist to his apostles in this wise Bel
leve and beware be the that louey and purchacen pees.
For they be called heyldren of god. ¶ Than sayd Melibe
now see I wel that ye loue not myn honour ne my Worship
Ye knowen that myn aduersaryes haue begonne this debate
And ye see wel that they ne requyre ne praye me of pees
ne they ayen not to be reconsyled Wolde ye than that I goo
and make me and obeye me vnto hem and eye hem merey
Forsothe that were not my Worship. For ryght as men
sayn outergrete humblenes engendreth grete dispreysyng
so sholde it fare by me in doyng this grete humylite or me
kenes. Than began prudence to make semblaunt of wrath
and sayd syre saue your grace / I loue your honour and
your prouffyght as I do myn owen and euer haue doo / ney
ther ye ne none other salle neuer the contrarye / And yet
yf I had sayd that ye shulde haue purchaced your pees
and the reconsilyation I ne had myskyll myskaped ne
sayd amys. For the Wise may saith / the dissention begyn
neth by another man / And the reconsilyng be hym self
begynneth / And the prophete saith Fle shrewdnes and
do goodnes seke pees & folowe hit in as mikyl as in the is
Yet saye I not that ye shal rather pursiewe to your aduer
saryes for pees / than they shal to yow. For I knowe wel
ynough that ye be so harde of herte that ye wil do no thing
for me. And Salamon saith that he that hath ouer harde
an herte he at leste shal mischappe & mistyde. Than Melibe
had herde dame prudence make semblaunt of wrath he sayd
in this wise / Dame I pray yow that ye be not displesed of

thinges that I saye. For ye knowe well that I am angry and wroth and that is no wonder. And they that be wroth wote not well what they do ne what they say. Wherfore the prophete saith that troubled eyen haue no cleer sight, but saye ye and counceylle me as you goodly liketh For I am redy to doo right as ye will desire. And yf ye will repreue me of my folye I am the more holden to loue you & to preyse you. For salamon saith, He that repreueth hym that doth folye he shal fynde grettter grace than he that disseyueth hym with swete wordes. Than said dame prudence I make no semblant of wrath ne of anger but for your prouffit. For Salamon saith He is more worth that repreueth or chydeth a fool for his folye shewyng hym semblant of wrath than he that supporteth hym and preyseth hym in his myspayng and laugheth at his folye. And this same Salamon saith afterward that by the sorowfull visage of a man that is to saye by the sory and the heuy contenance of a man the fole wreketh hym self and amendeth Than said Melleebe I shal not con answere you vnto so many fair resons as ye haue put to me and shewd. Saye ye shortly your will and your counceylle and I am redy to performe & fulfylle it. Than dame Prudence discouerd alle her will vnto hym and saide, I counceylle you aboue alle thinges that ye make pees betwene god and you, and be ye reconsiled vnto hym and to his grace. For as I haue said before God haue suffred you to haue al this tribulacion and disese for your synnes And yf ye do as ye saye you, godly wil sende your aduersaryes vnto you and make hym fulle at your wil redy to do your will and your

vnreuelacyon mysteryes. Sir Galaway sayeth / Whan the condicion of a may is pleasaunt & lykynge to god / he changeth the hertes of the mannys aduersaryes and constreyneth hem to beseke hym of pees and of grace And I pray yow lete me speke with your aduersaryes priuely. For they shal not knowe that it be your wille or your assente and than whan I knowe her wille and her entente I may counceylle you the more seldely. Dame sayde Melleke do your wille and your lykynge for I put me only in youre disposicion and ordenance.

Than whan dame prudence salbe the goode wille of her husbonde delyuerde and tolde aduys in her self / thus kynge hold she myght brynge this nede to a goode conclusion and to a goode ende. And whan she salbe her tyme she sende for thyse aduersaryes to come to her in to a preuy place / and she bide wisely vnto hem the grete goodnes that come of pees and the grete harmes and parelles that ley in warre & sayde to hem in a goodly maner / hold that they oughten to haue grete repentaunce of the iniurye & wronge that they hadde don to Melleke her lorde vnto her and her doughter.

And whan they herde þ wordes of dame prudence they were so enspired & rauysshed & hadde so grete ioye of her that wonder was to telle / A lady sayde they ye haue shewed vnto vs the blessynge of sobetenes after the salde of dauid the prophete for the reconsilynge / whiche that we be not worthy to haue in no manere / but we oughten to requyre it with grete contricion & humylite / that ye of your grete goodnes haue presented vnto vs / Nold se we wel that the seyenes

vndy the counseyng of Salamon is / he trowe he saith that these wordes multiphye vndy encreasy frendes vndy make fremdes to be dishonayr vndy mekle / certes saidy they we put alle our dede vndy al our mater vndy cause / holly in youre goody wille. And be redy to obeye to the comandement of my lordy Melleke And dere vndy benigne lady we pray you vndy beseche yow as mekely as we can that it like vnto youre grete goodnes to fulfillen in dede youre wordes goodly For we considereny vndy knowleche that we haue offendedy vndy greuydy my lordy Melleke out of mesure so ferforth that we be not of power to make hym amendes And therfore we obligey vs vndy bynde vs vndy our frendes for to done al his wille vndy cõmandementes / But paventure he hath suche anger vndy suche wrath to vs wardy he cause of our offence / that he wole enione vs suche peyne that we may not here hit ne susteyne hit / And therfore noble lady we beseche youre noble pite to take suche auisement in this nede that we ne our frendes be not disheritedy & destroyedy thurgh our folye.

Certes saidy dame prudence it is ay hardy thingy vndy righte perylous that a may put hym self al vterly in arbitration vndy Jugement vndy in the myghte & power of his enemye. For Salamon saith Beleue me vndy yeue audience to that I shal saye / ne yeue neuer the power ne gouernance of thy goodes. to thy sone. to thy wyf. to thy frende ne to thy broder / ne yeue thou myghte ne maistrye ouer thy body whileste thou lyueste / Wolle sith that he defendeth that a may sholdy not yeue to his broder ne to his frende the myghte of his body by a strenger reson he defendeth a may to yeue hym

[illegible] ſhal [illegible]
[illegible] my [illegible] for J [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

of her folies that is to saye the aduersaryes of Melleke/ hadd herd what these messageres saidd vnto hem/ they were right glad & ioyefull/ and answerd full meliely and benignely yeldyng graces & thankeynges to her lordd Melleke & to alle his companye. And shopen hem without ony delaye to go with ỳ messageres & to obeye to the cõmandement of her lordd Melleke. And right anon they tokē her way to her lorde Melleke/ And right anon they tokē her way to her lordes court and tokē with hem sõm of her trewe frendes to make feyth for hem and for to be her borwes. And when they were comen to the presence of Melleke he saidd to hem thise wordes/ hit stondeth thus saydd Melleke & soth it is that causeles & withoutey skyll & reson ye haue doy grete Iniury es to me to my wif prudence & to my doughter also. For ye haue entrydd in to my hous by violence & haue doon suche oul trage that alle men knowe well that ye haue deseruydd deth And therfore woldd I knowe of you whether ye will putte you to punysshyng And the chastysing & the vengeaūce of this oultrage in the will of me & of my wif or ellis not.

Whan the wiseste of hem thre answerdd for hem all & saide Syr saidd he we knowe well that weke vnworthy to come to the court of so grete a lordd & so worthy as ye be/ For we haue so gretly mystakey vs & haue offendedd & agylted in suche wise agaynst youre hye lordship that trewly we haue deseruydd the deth/ but yet for the grete goodnes & debonairte that alle the worldd witnesseth of your ysone/ we submitte vs to the excellence & benignite of your gracious lordship/ & besechyng you of your merciable pite ye will cõsidere our grete repentaūce & lowe submission/ and graūte vs forgyuenes of

of youre oultrageous trespalys vnto offensis. For wel we knowen that youre liberal grace & mercy stretchen further in to goodnes, than doy youre oultrageous cyrtes & trespaces in to wickednes. All be hit that vnresonably & vnreprouably we haue agylted and agreuyd youre hye lordship.

Than Melleke to her hem from the grounde ful benygnly and receyued her obligations & bondes by her othes vpon her pleges and borowes. And assigned hem a certain day to retorne vnto his court for to receyue and accepte the Jugement that Melleke wolde cõmande to be doh on hem by the causes aforsaid, whiche thinges ordeyned euery man retorned to his owen hous. And whan dame prudence sawe her tyme, she seyned and axed her lord Melleke, what vengeance he thought to take vpon his aduersaries. To whiche Melleke answerde and saide Certes J thinke and purpose me fully to disherite hem of alle that euer they haue & put hem in exile for euermore. Certes saidy dame Prudence, this were a cruel sentence and moche agaynst reson. For ye be riche ynowh and haue none nede of other mennes goodes. And ye myght ful lightly in this wise gete yow a ful oultrous name, whiche is a vicyous lyuyng and ought to be eschewyd of euery goody man. For after the worde of thapostle, Couetyse is the rote of alle harmes. And therfore hit were better to you to lese so moche goody of youre owen, than for to take of her goody in this manere. For better is is to lese goody with worship, that it is to wynne goody with vilonye and shame. And euery man ought to do his diligence and besynes to gete hym a goody name. And yet shal he not hooly leue hym in keepyng of his goody

name And yet shal he not thole hym in hepynge of
his goode name / but he shal alleddey enforcen to do some
thinge by whiche he may renouele as renelle his goode name
For it is wreton that the olde goode loos of a man or goode
name is some goode and passith whan it is not nelbedy re
nouelyd / And as tolchinge that ye sayn / ye wole eyle
your auersaryes / that thynketh me mache agayn reson
and oute of mesure / consyderynge the polder that they haue
yeue you vpon hem selfe . And yet it is wreton that he is
worthy to lese his pryuylege that mysuseth the mighte and
the power that is yeue hym And I set cas that ye mighe
emoyne hem that payne be ryghte and be lalde / whiche that
I trolbe ye maye not doo / I saye ye myghte not put hit
to execution . For parauenture thay were it lykle to re
torne to the warre as hit was before / And therfore yf
ye wyll that men do you obeyssaunce ye muste demene
you more curteysly / this it to saye ye muste yeue more
esy penaunce and Jugement / For it is wreton that he
that most curteysly comandeth / to hym men moste obeye .
And therfore I pray yolb that in thys necessyte and in
thys nede ye caste yolb for to ouercome your herte . For
Seneke saith / He that ouercometh his herte / ouerco
meth thryes / And Tullius sayth / Ther is no thynge
so comendable in a grete lordy as whan he is debonayr
and meke / and appeesith hym lightly / And I pray you
that ye wil nolb forbere to do vengeaunce in suche a manere
that your goode name may be kept and conseruyd .
And that men may haue cause and mater to preyse yolb
of pyte and of mercy / And that ye haue no cause to

repente yow of thinge that is wony. For Seneke saieth He
abhorreth ony euyl maner that repenteth hym of his ow
horpe/ Wherfore I praye you lete mercy be in your herte/ to
theffect and to thentente that god almyghty haue mercy
on yow in his laste Jugement. For seynt James saith in
his epistlis/ Jugement Withoute mercy shal be do to hym
that hath no mercy on an other Wighte.

Whan Melebe had herde the grete skylles and resons
of dame Prudence and her Wise Informations and
techinges his herte began to enclyne to the Wille of his Wyf
Considerynge her grete entente conformed hym anon and
assented to Worke after her counceyll/ And thanked god
of Whom procedeth alle goodnes and vertue/ that hym hath
sente a Wyf of so grete discrecion. And Whan the day cam
that his aduersaryes shold appere in his presence He spack
to hem ful goodly and sayde in this Wise/ Al be hit so that
of your pryde and presumption and hie foly of your negli
gence and vncomynge ye haue myssbon you and trespas
sed vnto me/ yet for as mykyll as I se your grete humylite
and that ye be sory and repentaunte of your gyltes hit
constreyneth me to do you grace and mercy/ Wherfore I
resseyue you to my grace and forgeue you verely alle the
offences Iniuryes and Wronges that ye haue don ayenst me
to this effecte & to this ende that god of his endeles mercy
Wille at the day of my dyynge forgyue me my gyltes/ that
I haue trespassed to hym in this Worldy/ For doubteles yf
We be sory and repentaunt for our synnes and gyltes/ the
sight of our lordy god is so fre & so mercyable that he Will
forgieue vs our gyltes and leynge vs to the blysse that

wherof ſhal haue ende amen ✣

Here Endeth Chaucers tale of Melleꝺe
Prudence his Wif & ſophie his doughter ✣
And begynneth the Monkes Prologe ✣

WHenne endid Was the tale of Melleꝺe
And of Prudence & of her benignite
Our oſt ſaide as J am feythful man
And be the precyous corpus madrian
J hadde leuyr than a barel of ale
That goodly leef my Wif had herd this tale
For ſhe is no thing of ſuch patience
As Was this Melleꝺees Wif Prudence
Be goddis bonys Whan J bete my knaues
She bringith me the grete clobbid ſtaues
And cryeth ſle the doggis enerichon
And breke both hak and alſo boon
And yf that ony neyghbour of myn
Wol nat in chirche to my Wif enclyn
Or be ſo hardy to her treſpas
Whan ſhe comyth hom ſhe rampith in my face
And cryeth fals coWardy Wreke thy Wif
Be corpus dis J Wil haue thy knyf
And thou ſhalt haue my diſtaf & go ſpynne
Fro day to nyght ſhe Wol thus begynne
Alias ſhe ſaith that euyr J Was ſhape
To Wedde a mylkſop a coWardy ape
That Wol be ouerledy With euery Wight

Thou darst not stonde be thy wyf a ryghs
This is my liff, but yf that I wolde fighte
And out atte dore, anone I moot me dighte
And ellis I am lost, but yf that I
Be lik a wilde lioun fool hardy
I woot wel she wil do me sle sone day
Som neyghbour and thanne go my way
For I am parlous with knyf in hondy
Al be it that I dar not her withstonde
For she is big in armys be my feith
That shal be fynde that here myn doth or saith
But lete vs passe alwey from this matere
My lordy sire Monk he saith be merry of chere
For ye shul tellyn a tale trewly
To Poucheste stondith here fast by
Ride forth myn olwey lordy herke not our game
But be my trouthe I knowe not your name
Whethir shal I calle you my lordy dan John
Or dan Thomas dan Robert or dan alon
Or of what hous be ye be your fadir kyn
I wolde to gody thou hast a ful fair chyn
It is a gentil pasture there thou gost
Thou art nat lik a penaunte gost
Ye on my feith thou art som officere
Som worthy seyter or som celerer
For be my fadir soule as to my dome
Thou art a maistir whey thou art at hom
No poure cloistrer ne no per nouice
But a gouernour wily and wise

And eyer with all of hastily and of dedys
A bel saying persone for the nonys
I prey to god yeue hym confusion
That first the brought in to religion
Thold wold ist haue be a tredefoule a right
Haddist thold as great leue as thou hast myght
To pfourme al thy lust in gendrure
Thou haddist begotyn many a creature
Alas why weriest thou so wide a cope
God yeue me sorow and I were pope
Not only thold but euery mighty man
Though he were shore vp on his pan
Shulde haue a wif for al this worlde is lothy
Religion hath take vp al the cothy
Of tredynge and lorel may be shrympis
Of febil treys ther comyth wreched ympis
This makith that our heiris be so splendir
And febil that they may not bel disgendre
This makith that our wyues wol assay
Religious folk for they may better pay
Of tymus paiementis thay wold be
God wot no lusshburghs paye ze
But be not wroth my lordy though I play
Ful ofte in game a soth haue y herdy say
This worthy monk took al in pacience
And saide I wol do my diligence
As fer as sownyth in to honeste
To telle you a tale or two or thre
And yf you list to harkyn hidir warde

I Wol yow sayn of the lif of saint Edward
Or ellis tragedyes first Wol I telle
Of Whiche I haue an hundredy in my selle
Tragedy is forto telle a certeyn storye
As olde bokis makyn memorye
Of hem that stondyn in greet prosperite
Andy is falle out of his degre
Into myserye andy endith wrecchidly
Andy they ben tretyedy comynly
Of .vj. feet Whiech men clepyn exametron
In prose elle ten enditidy many on
Andy in metre many a sondry wyse
Lo this ought ynough to suffise
Now harkenyth yf you list for to here
But first I besecke yow in this matere
Thogh I be orde telle not thise thingis
Be it of popis Emperours & kyngis
Andy after her agis as men writen fynde
But telle hem som before andy som behynde
As it comyth to my remembraunce
Haue me excusidy of myn ignoraunce

¶ Here endith the Monkis prology.

¶ Here begynneth the Tale.

I Wil be Bail in maner of tragedie
The harm of hem that stonden in hye degre
Andy fallen so that ther nas no remedy
To bringe hem out of her aduersite
For certeyn Whenne that fortune list to fle
Ther may noman of her the cours withholde

Many a may outrthrow hath she
Geth Baar be this enſampil yong and olde
Lucifer though he an aungil were
And nat a may at hym I Wil begynne
For thy fortune may nat aungel dere
From high degre yet fyl he for his fynne
Doun in to helle Where he is yet ynne
O Lucifer knightiſt of aungellis alle
Wold art thou ſathanas that maiſt not thynne
Out of misery Which thou art falle
To Sampſon Which Bas annunciat
Be the aungel longe or his natiuite
And Bas to god almyghty conſecrat
And ſtood in nobles Whilech he mighte ſe
Was neuyr ſuch another as Bas he
To ſpeke of ſtrengthe and therto hardines
But to his Wyuys tolde he his ſecre
Thorough Whiche he ſlow hym ſelf for Wreathidnes
Sampſon this nobil and mighty champioun
Without Wepen ſaue his hondis they
He ſlough and al to rente the lioun
Toward his Weddynge Walkyng he the Wey
His fals Wif coude hym pleſe and prey
Til ſhe his counſel knew and ſhe vntrewe
Vnto his foos his counſel gan bewrey
And hym forſook and took another newe
An hundrid foxis took Sampſon for Ire
And al her tailis he to gedir bonde
And ſette the foxis tailis al on fyre

For he in euery tayl. hath put a brondy
And they brent alle the cornes in that londy
And her olyues and hy Vynes eek
A thousandy men eke he slowe with his honde
And hadde no wepyn with hym but an asse cheek
Whan they were slayn so thristidy hym that he
Was wel nyhe lorn for whiche he gan to prey
That godi wolde of his pyne haue som pitee
And sende hym drynk or elis muste he dye
And of an asse cheke that was so drye
Out of a wangy toth sprangy anon a welle
Of whiche he dranke inowh shortly to seye
Thus halp hym godi. as Indeum can telle
Be leuey force at gasa on an nyght
Magre alle the Philistenys of that Cyte
The gatys of the town he vp plight
And on his backe y caryedi hem hath he
High vp on an hille where as men myght se
O nobil and myghty Sampson leef and dere
That strongy worthy and nobil hath he
In alle this worlde ne hath he thy pere
This Sampson neythir sidir dranke ne wyn
Ne on his hedy cam rasour noy ne shere
Be precept of the messanger deuyne
For al his strengthe was in his here
Of his strength he hadi neuer pere
And. xy. yeer of yrael he hadi the gouernaunce
But after sone shal he wepe meny a teer
For a wommay brought hym to myschaunce

Unto his lemmay dalida he tolde
That in his heris al his strengethe lay
And falsly to his foos hym she solde
And sleppynge vpon a harm vpon a day
They made to clippe or shere his heer alway
And made his fomen al his craft aspien
And whenne that they hym fondy in such array
They bondy hym first and put out his yen
But or his heer were clippidy or shaue
Ther was no bonde that mighte hym bynde
But nouh is he put in prison in a caue
Where as they made hym atte querne grynde
O nobil Sampson strengist of manlynde
O whilom Jugge in glorie and in riches
Yet nauer lyke to the I fynde
Sith thou art from wele falle in to wrechidnes
The endy of this caytif was as I shal say
His fomen madeny a feste vp on a day
And made hym there beforn hem play
And this was in a tempil of greet aray
But atte laste he made a foul fray
For he two postis shook and made hem falle
And doun fil the tempil & al there it lay
And slouh hym self and eke his fomen alle
This is to say the princis euerichon
And eke a thousandy bodyes were there slayn
With fallynge of the greete tempil of stoon
Of Sampson wole I nomore sayn
Seth baar of this ensampil oldy & playn

That nomay telle her counseyll to her Wyues
Of suche thinge as they Wolde haue secrete sayñ
Yf that hit tolche her lymys or her lyues

OF Hercules the souereyn conquerour
Songynge his Werkis loude & high renoun
For in his tyme. of strengthe he baar the flour
He slough and raft the flyymme of the lioun
And of Centaurus leyde the hoost adoun
He arpies slough the cruel briddis felle
He the golteyn applis raft fro the dragoñ
He out Cerberus the houndy of helle
He slough the cruel tyraunt busurus
And made his hors to frete hym fleseh & booñ
He slough the lerny serpent venemous
Of Achilles elbo hornes brak he one
And he slough Cakus in a caue of stoon
He slough the geaunt Anthens the stronge
He slough the gryssly boor and that anone
And baar his heedy. vp on his spere longe
Was neuer Wighe sith the Worlde began
That slough so many monstris as didy he
Throwh the Wide Worlde his name ran
What for his strengthe and his hountee
And euery veme Wente he for to se
He Was so strongy that nomay mighte hym lette
And bothe Worldis endis seith Thimothe
In stede of houndis he of bras a piler seite
A lemmay hadde this nobil champioun
That highte deyanyra as fresh as may

And as clerkis make mencioun
She hath hym sent a sherte fresh and gay
Allas this sherte and wel a way
Emenenmyd was subtilly with alle
That er he hadde werid it half a day
It made his flesh fro his bonys falle
But natheles som clerkis here excusyn
Be on that highte nessus that it makedy
Be as he may I wol her not accusey
But on his body the sherte he werid al naked
Tyl the flesh was for the venym slaked
And whanne he salwe non other remedye
In hoot colis he hath hym self raked
For with no venym dryned he to dye
Thus starf this worthy mighty heraules
Lo who may truste in fortune ony throwe
For hym that folowith al this worlde of prees
Or he be waar is ofte leyd ful lowe
Ful wise is he that hym self can knowe
Be waar for whanne that fortune list to glose
Thanne waitith she her may to doun throwe
Be such a wey as he wold lest suppose
The mighty trone the precyous tresour
The glorius septre and the ryal maieste
That hadde the kyng Nabugodonosor
With tunge unmeth may discribid be
He tholyes way Jherusalem that cyte
The vessel of the tempyl he with hym lad
At Babilon was his souerayn see

In Whiche his glory and his delit he had
The fayreſt childreyn of the bloody Ryal
Of Jeruſalem he dede to gelde anone
And made ech of hem to be his thral
Among alle other daniel Was one
That Was the Wiſeſt child of euerychone
For he the dremys of the kyng expowned
There as in Caldey clerkys Was ther none
That Wiſte to What fyn his dremys ſowned
This proud kyng let make a ſtatu of golde
Sixti cubitis long and ſeuyn in brede
To Whiche ymage. both yong and old
Commaundid he to loute and haue in drede
Or in a furneys. ful of flames rede
He ſholde be ded that Wolde not obeye
But neuer Wolde accorde to that dede
Daniel ne his yonge felowes tweye
This kyng of kyngis proud and elate
He Wende god that ſittith in mageſte
Me myght not bereue his aſtate
But ſodenly he loſte his dignite
And lik a beſt hym semyd forto be
And eet hey as an oxe and lay ther oute
In rayn With Wilde beſtis Walkid he
Tyl a certeyn tyme Was come aboute
And lik an egles fetheris Were his heris
And naylis lik birdes clawis Were
God releuyd hym at certeyn yeris
And yaf hym Witte & than With many a teer

He thonkidy gody andy ayre his hyf in feer
Was he to do amys or more trespas
Andy er that he laidy Was oy his beere
He knelb that gody Was ful of myght & grace
His sone Whiche that highte Baltasar
That helby the regne after his fadir day
He by his fader coude not beBaar
For proudy he Was of herte andy of aray
Andy eke ay ydolastre Was he ay
His high astat assurydy hym in pryde
But fortune cast hym douy andy there he lay
Andy sodenly his regne gan diuide
A feste he made vnto his lordis alle
Up oy a tyme he made hem blithe be
Andy thamme his officers gan he calle
Goth bryngy forth the vesselis quody he
Whiche that my fadir in his prosperite
Out of the tempyl of Jherusaleny beraft
Andy to our goddis thanke We
Of honour that our eldrys With vs laft
His Wif his lordis andy his concubynys
Ay dronkyn Whilis her appetitis last
Out of thyse nobil vesselis sondry Wynes
Andy oy a Wal this kyngy his yen cast
Andy saB ay hondy armeles that Wrot fast
For feer of Whiche he quok andy sighedy sore
This hondy that Baltasar made so sore agast
Wrot Mane. techel. phares andy nomore
In al that londy magicien Was ther noy

That coude expowne what this letter ment
But daniel expowned it anon
And saide kyng. god to thy fadir sent
Glorye and honour regne tresour and rent
And he was proud & no thing god he dred
And therfore gret wrath god vp on hym sent
An hym bereafte the regne that he hadde
He was out cast of mannys company
With asses was his habitation
And eet hey as a best in weet and dry
Til that he knelid be grace and be reson
That god of heuyn hath domination
Ouer euery regne and euery creature
And thanne had god of hym compassion
And hym restoryd his regne and his figure
Eke thou that art his sone art proud also
And knowest alle thyse thyngis pryuyly
And art rebel to god and his foo
Thou drank eek of his tressels boldly
Thy wif eek and thy wenchis synfully
Dronk of the same tresselis sondry wynys
And heryedst fals goddis cursidly
Therfore to the schappyn greet pryne is
This hond was sent from god that on the walle
Woot mane techel phares trust me
Thy regne is doon. thou weyyst not al
Dimmedy is thy regne and hit schal be
To medes and to persiens quod he
And that same nyght the kyng was slaue

And Darius occupied his regne
Though he therto hade neythir right ne lalbe
Lordingis her by ensaumpil molde ye take
Hold that in lordship is no filthyrnesse
For Wherme that fortune Wyl a may forsake
He lerith albey his regne and his riches
And eke his frendis bothe more and les
And What may hath frendis throwugh fortune
Mys hap Wol make hym enemyes I gesse
This Prouerbe is ful soth & ful cōmune

QEnobia of Belmarie quene
As Writith Pereus of her nobles
So Worthy Was in armys and so kene
That no Wight passid her in hardynes
Ne in lynage ne in noy other gentilnes
Of kyngis blood of Pere as she descendid
I say that she had not most fiersnes
But of her shappe she myght not be amendid
From her childhoode I fynde that she fled
Office of Wommay and to Wode she Went
And many a Wilde hertis blood she shed
With arowis kroody that she to hem sent
She Was so swift that she anoy hem hent
And Wherme that she Was elder she Wold kylle
Lioums liberdis and hem alto rent
And in her armys Welde hem at her Wille
She durste Wilde bestis demmys seke
And renne in the mountey al the myght
And slepe Vnder abusshe and she coude eke

Wrastil he kepte force and kepte myghte
With ony yonge man were he neuer so wighte
There myghte nothing in her armys stonde
She kepte her maydenhede from euery wighte
To no man deyned she to be bonde
But atte last her frendis haue her maryed
To Onedak a prince of a Cite
All were it so that she hem longe taryed
And ye shul vnderstonde how that he
Hadde suche fantesies as had she
But natheles when they were knet in fere
They lyued in ioye and infelicite
For eche of theym hadde other leef and dere
Saue o thing that she nolde neuer assent
Be no wey that he sholde be her by
But onys for it was her pleyn entent
To haue a child the worlde to multiplye
And also sone as she myghte aspye
That she was not with childe with that dede
Thanne wolde she suffir hym do his fantesie
Est sonys and nat but onys oute of drede
And yf she were with childe at that cast
Nomore shulde he pleye that game
Til fully .xl. daies were y past
Thenne wolde she onys suffir hym the same
All were this Onedak wilde or tame
He gat nomore of here for thus she sayde
It was to vyuys lecherie and shame
In other caas yf men with hem playde

Who sonys be this Onedak had she
The whiche she kept in vertu and lettrure
But nold vnto our tale turne we
I say that worshipfull creature
And wise therwith & large with mesure
So penibil in warre and artays eke
Ne nonne labour myght in werre endure
Was non. though al this worlde men shuld seche
Her riche aray might not be tolde
As wel in vessel as in clothinge
She was al glady in chery & in golde
And eke she lefte not for non huntynge
To haue of sondry tongis folk knowynge
Wherme that she leyser hadde and forto entende
To lerne lokis was al her likynge
Hold she in vertu her lif might dispende
And shortly of this story forto trete
So doughty was her husbondy as she
That they conquerydy many regnes grete
In the orynt with many a feyr cite
Apertenaunt vnto the maieste
Of Rome and with strenghte heldy hem fast
Ne neuer might her fomen do her fle
Al the whilez that Onedakis dayes last
Her batellis who so list hem forto rede
Agayn Sapor the kyng and other mo
And hold al this proces fil in dede
Why she conquerydy & what title she had therto
And aftir of hir myschief and her woo

How that she was besegid and I telle
Lat hym to my maistyr petrark go
That britith ynow of this I undertake
Whenne Onedack was ded she myghtily
The remys held and with her owen hond
Agayns her foos she faught trebly
That ther nas prince ne kyng in al that londe
But were glad yf they that grace fonde
That she ne sholde vp on his lond werreye
With her they made aliaunce be londe
To be in pees and lete hem ryde and pleye
The Empereour of Rome Claudius
Ne hym beforn the Romayn Galiene
Ne durste neuer be so corageous
Ne noy ermyn ne none egipcien
Ne surrien ne noy arabien
With ynne the felde that durst with her fighte
Lest that she wolde hem with her hondis sleen
Or with her meyne put hem to flighte
In kyngis habit wente her sonys two
As heyris of here remys alle
And hermamo and titamallo
Her namys were as persians hem calle
But ay fortune hath in her hony galle
This myghty quene may no while endure
Fortune made her out of her regne falle
To wrecchidnesse and to mysauenture
Aurilian whenne that he the gouernaunce

Of Rome cam in his hondis Meyne
He schop hym on this quest to do Vengeance
And with his legions he took his Wey
Tolbardy Tenobie and schortly forto seyne
He made her fle and atte laste her hent
And fetheridy hir & ellis her childeryy tWeyne
And Way the londe & hony to Rome he Went
Among othir thingy that he Way
Her chare that of goldy Was Wrought & perre
This grete Romayn this auriliaŋ
Hath With hym lady that for mey schelde se
Before his triumphe Walkidy she
With goldyn cheynes on her necke hangynge
Crolbnedy she Was as after her degre
And ful of perre chargidy her clothynge
Allas fortune she that Whilom Was
Dredful to kyngis and to Emperouris
Nolb galWith al the pepil on her allas
And she that helmyd Was in stranke schouris
And Way before tolbnes strongy & touris
Shal on her hed nolb Were auetrempte
And she that bare the septre ful of flouris
Shal bere a distaf her cost forto cupte
OF Melan grete Barnabo Viscounte
Gody of delite & scorge of lumbardye
Why shulde nat I thy fortune acounte
Sithen in estat thou clombyn Were so hye
Thy brothir sone that Was thy dolbbyl alye
For he thy neuelbe Was and sone in lalbe

With ynne his prison made hym to dye
But why ne holde I that thou were stalle
Of the erle Englehm of prise the langoure
Other may no tunge telle for pite
But litil out of prise stondieth a toure
In whiche toure in prison put was he
And with hym his litel children thre
The eldist skarsly .vi. yere was of age
Allas fortune it was gret cruelte
Suche briddis forto put in suche a cage
Dampned he was to deth in that prison
For roger whiche Bisshop was of pyse
Had oy hym maad a fals suggestion
Thrwh whiche the pepil gan on hym aryse
And put hym in prison in suche a wyse
As ye haue herd and mete & drynk he hadde
And therwith all it was ful poore & hadde
And on aday it be fil that in that hour
Whey that his mete was wont to be brought
The gailer shitte the dris of the toure
He herde it wel but he spak it nought
And in his herte ther fil a thought
That they for hunger wolde do hym to dien
Allas quod he allas that I was wrought
Therwith the teris fille from his yen
His yonge sone that thre yere was of age
Vnto his fader he sayde why do ye wepe
Whenne wol our Gayler bringe our potage
Is ther no morsel breed that he do kepe

I am so hungry that I may not slepe
Wolde God that I mighte slepe ones
Thanne sholde no hunger in my bowele crepe
Ther is no thing that euer me were leuere
Thus day be day this child gan to crye
Til in his fadres barm adoun it lay
And sayde fair fader I mot dye
For this payne no lenger suffre I may
And whenne the wofull fader dede hym say
For wo his armys he gan to byte
And sayde allas fortune and welaway
Thy fals whele my wo I may wyte
His othir child wende that for hunger it was
That he his armys gnew & not for woo
And sayde fader do not so allas
But rathir eet the flesh vp on vs two
Our flesh thow yaf vs take our flesh vs fro
And ete ynough right thus the child sayde
And aftir that with ynne a day or two
The child lepe hym down in his lappe & deyde
Hym self dispeired eek for hunger starf
Thus endid the mighty erle of pyse
From high estate fortune from hym carf
Of this tragedye it oughte I nought suffyse
Who so wil here it in a lengir wyse
Redith the grete poet of ytaile
That highte dante for he can it deuyse
Fro poynt to poynt nat o word wil he fayle
Al though that alle were as ricyous

As eny sende that lieth sul lolle aboun
Yet he as telleth vs Suetonius
Al this Worlde hadde in subiection
Bothe est and West and septemtrion
Of Rubies. saphires and of perlis White
Were alle his clothis hedwddy vp and doun
For he in gemmys gretly gan delyte
More deliciat. more pompous of aray
More proude Was neuer Emperour than he
That ilkie cloth that he hadde Werydy o day
After that tyme he nolde it neuer se
Mettis of goold eheedy hadde he gret plente
To fisshe in tiber Whenne he list to pleye
His lustis Were as lalde in his degre
For fortune as his frendy Wolde hym obeye
He Rome brent for his dilyacye
The senatours he slough vp on aday
To here hold that Wommen Wolde Wepe & crye
And slough his brothir & by his fuster lay
His moder made he in a pytous aray
For he her Wombe slytte to be holde
Where he conceyued Was so Wel alday
That he so lityl of his modir tolde
No teris out of his eyen for that sighte
Me eny but sayde a fayr Wommay Was she
Gret Wondir as that he coude or myghte
Be domesman of her dedy beaute
The Wyn to brynge comaundidy he
And dranke anon noy other Wo he made

Whenne might is ioyned vnto cruelte
Allas to dere bot the lenyth wide
In yonthe a maistir hadyn this Emperour
To teche hym lettrure andy curtesye
For of moralite he was the flour
Andy in his tyme but yf his bokis lye
Andy whilis his maister hadde of hym maistrie
He made hym so stomynge andy so souple
That longe tyme it was or tirannye
Or ony vice durste in hym vncouple
Seneca his maistir was of which I deuyse
The cause Nero hadyn of hym such drede
For he for his vicis wolde hym chastise
Discretly as by worde andy not be dede
Syre he wolde say ay Emperour moot nede
Be vertuous andy hate Tyrannye
For whiche he made hym in a bath to blede
On bothe his armys til he must dye
This Nero hadde eek of a custumaunce
In yongthe ayens his maistir to ryse
Whiche afftir wardy him thoughte a gret greuaunce
The cause he ofte wolde hym chastyse
Therfore he made hym dye in this wyse
To chese in a bath to dye in this maneve
Rathir thanne to haue another turmentyse
Andy thus hath Nero slayn his maistir dve
Now fyl it so that fortune liste no lenger
The high pryde of Nero to cherisshe
For thoughe he were strong yet was she strenger

Sh thoughte thus he godyn I am to nyce
To sette a may that is ful fillidy of vice
In his degre and an Emperour hym calle
Be godyn out of his sete I wol hym trice
Whanne he lest wenyth sonnest shal he falle.
The pepil wos vpon hym on an nyghte
For his defaute and whanne he it aspyedy
Out of his doris anon he hath hym dighte
Alone and there he wende haue be alyedy
He knockidy fast and ay the more he cryedy
The fastir shit they the dorys alle
Tho wiste he wel he hadyn hym self begilydy
And wente his way no lengir durste he calle
The pepil cryde and romblidy vp and downe
That with his eris he herde hold that they sayde
Where is this fals treiteur this newyn
For feer ful neer out of his witte he breyde
And to his goddis pitously he seyde
For socour but it myghte nat be tyde
For drede of this hym thoughte that he deyde
An ran in to a gardyn hym to hyde
And in this gardyn fondy he chorlis tweye
And sittyngy be.a. fyre gret and reedy
And to the chorlis tho he gan to preye
To sle hym and to girde of his hedy
That to his body whan he were dedy
Were no despyt doyn for his defame
Hym self he slough he coude no bettir rede
Of whiche fortune lolliche and hidy game

Was neuer Capteyn vnder a kyng
That regnes mo put in subiection
Ne strenger was in feldy of alle thing
As in his tyme ne greter of renoun
Ne more pompous in high presumpcion
Than Olopherny whiche fortune atte laste
So horrously ladde hym vp and doun
Til that he dedy was or that he wiste
Not only that this worlde hadde of hym alle
For lesing of riches and liberte
But he made euery man reneye his lalle
Nabugodonosor was lordy saide he
None other gody sholde honouredy be
Ayens his heste eyer dar no wight trespas
Sane in Betulia a strongy cyte
Where Eliachim was prest of that place
But take kepe of the deth of Olopherny
Amydy his ost he dronke lay al nyght
With ynne his tente large as is a bery
And yet for al his pompe and al his myght
Judith a wommay as he lay vpright
Slepinge his hedy of smoot & fro his tente
Ful preuely she stale from euery wight
And dy to the cyte she hath it sente
What nedith it of kyng Antiochus
To telle his high and ryal maieste
His high pryde his werk venemus
For such another may nas neuer as he
Redith what that he was in Machale

And yet with the proude Worldis that he leyde
And Why he fil from his prosperite
And in ay hell hold Wretchidly he deyde
Fortune hym hadde enhaunsid so in pryde
That strily he Wende he myghte atteyne
Unto the sterris Up on euery syde
And in a balaunce to Weye ech mountey̅
And alle the flodis of the se restreyn
And goddis peple hadde he most in hate
Hem Wolde he sle in tourment and in pey̅
Wenynge that god ne myghte his pryde abate
And for Nichamore and Timothe
Wiche Jewes Were renaused myghtily
Unto the Jewes suche ay hate hadd he
That he hadde gretthid his chare ful hastely
And swoor and saide ful despitously
Unto Jerusalem. he Wolde eftsone
To Wreke his Ire on it ful cruelly
But of his purpos Was he let ful sone
God for his manace hym sore smote
With inuisibil Wounde ay meanabyl
That in his guttes carf so and boot
That his peynys Were Importable
And certenly the Wreche Was Unreasonabil
For many amamys guttis did he peyne
But from his purpos cursid & dampnabil
For al his smert. he nolde hym restreyne
But hidy anon prively his ooste
And sodenly ore the thay Was Waar

Gody dauntyd all his pryde and al his host
For he so sore fil out of his chare
That alle his lymys and his sevyn to tare
So that he ne myghte go ne ryde
But in a chayer men aboute hym bare
Al for brosidy bothe bak and syde
The Wreche of gody hym smot so cruelly
That in his body Wickyd Wormys crept
And therWith al he stank so horribly
That none of alle his meyne that hym kept
Whethir that he Wook or ellis slepte
Ne mighte not of hym the stynk endure
And in this myschief he Wayled & eke Wepte
And knelt gody lord of euery creature
To al his ost and to hym self also
Ful Waltsom Was the stynk of his aureyn
No man mighte hym here to ne fro
And in his stynk and in his horrible peyn
He starf ful Wrechidly on a mountayn
Thus hath this Robber & this homicide
That many a man made to Wepe & playne
Such guerdon as belongith Vnto pryde
The story of alisaundir is so comune
That euery Wight that hath discrecion
Hath herd sumdhat or al of his fortune
This Wide Worlde as in conclusion
The Wayle strengthe and his renoun
They Were glad for pres Vnto hym sende
The pryde of man and koste he leyd a doun

Where so he cam in to the Worldis ende
Comparison myghte yet neuer be maddy
Get Why hym andy another conqueroure
For al this Worlde for drede of hym hath quakidy
He Was of knyghthody audy of fredym flour
Fortune hym made the heir of high honour
Saue Why & Wommen no thingy might a swage
His high entent in armes andy labour
So Was he ful of louynge corage
What pite Were it to hym thoughJ you tolde
Of darius andy of a hundridy thousandy mo
Of princis. erlis. andy kyngis. bolde
Whiche he conqueryd & brought to Woo
JI say as fer as amay may ryde or go
The Worlde Was his. What sholde J more deuyse
For thoughJ Wrote or tolde you euyr mo
Of his knyghthood it mighte not suffyse
Xij. yeer he regnedy as J rede in Machabe
Philippis sone of Macedo he Was
That first Was kyngy of grece that countre
O Worthy gentyl Alisaunder allas
That euyr sholde falle such aeas
Empoysondy of thy folk thow Were
Thy strongy fortune hath tournyd in to ay aas
Andy for the ne Wepte she neuer a teer
Who shal yeue men terys to compleyne
To the of gentilnesse andy of franchyse
That all the Worlde Weldidy in his demeyne
Andy yet hym thoughte it mighte not suffyse

So ful was his corage of high empryse
Allas who shal me helpe to endite
Fals fortune and poison to despise
The which of al this boo I write
Be wisedom manhood and high labour
From humbilhede and fro ryal maieste
Up woos he Julius the conquerour
That al the occident be londe and see
Be strengthe of honde or elles be trete
And vnto Rome made hem tributary
And sith of Rome Emperour was he
Tyl that fortune wex his aduersary
O mighty Cesar that in Thessaly
Ayens Pompeius fadir thyn in lalbe
That of the orient hadde al the chiualry
As fer as that the day begynneth to dalbe
They ꝑ thorough knyghthode hast take & slalbe
Saue selfe folk that with Pompeius fledde
Thorou whiche thold puttist al the orient in albe
Thanke fortune that so wel the spedde
But nold a litil while I wil bewayl
This Pompeius this nobil gouernour
Of Rome whiche that flex at this bataille
I say oon of his men a fals traitour
His hed of smoot to wynne hym fauour
Of Julius and to hym the hed broughte
Allas Pompeye of the orient conquerour
That fortune vnto such a fyn the broughte
To Rome agayn repeyreth Julius

With his triumphe laureat ful hye
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euiyr hadde of his high astat enuye
Ful pryuily hadde maad conspiracye
Ayens this Julius in subtil Wyse
And cast the place in Whiche he sholde dye
With boydekyns as I shal you deuyse
This Julius vnto the Capitoly went
Vp on ady as he Was Wont to goñ
And in the Capitoly anoñ hym hent
This fals Brutus on of his foul fooñ
And strikyd hym With boydekyns anoñ
With many a Wounde & thus they leet himlye.
But neuer gruntyd he at no strook but ooñ
Or ellis at his Wo but yf his story lye
So manly Was this Julius of herte
And so Wel louyd estatly honeste
That thoughe his dedly Woundis so sore smert
His mantel ouer his hippis cast he
For nomay sholde se his priuyte
And as he lay in dyynge on a traumet
And Wiste verily that dye shulde he
Of honeste hit hadde he remembraunce
Lucan vnto this story I recoñende
And to Sneton and to Valery also
That of this story Writen Word and ende
Holl that thyse conqueroure ellio
Fortune Was first frendy & sithen foo
Nomay truste vp on his fauour longe

But haue here in a Wayte for euermo
Witnes on alle the conquerours straunge
The riche Cresus whilom kyng of lyde
Of whiche Cresus Citerus sone hym dradde
Yet was he araught amyd al his pryde
And to bestrid men to the fire hym had
But suche arayn doun fro the firmament shadde
That queynte the fire and made hym to scape
But to be Waar yet no grace he had
Tyl fortune on the galowis made hym gape
Wherme he ascaped Was he coude nat stynte
Forto begynne a newe aray agayn
He Wende Wel for that fortune hym sent
Suche that he ascapid thurgh the rayn
That of his foos he myghte not be slayn
And suche a sweuyn vp on a nyght he mette
Of whiche he Was so proude & eke so feyn
That in vengeaunce he alle his herte sette
Vpon a tre he Was as hym thoughte
There Jupiter hym Wesshe bothe hals & syde
And Phebus eek a fair to Wail hym brought
To drye hym With & therWith Wept his pryde
And to his doughter that stood hym besyde
Whiche that he knew in high sentence habounde
He bad her telle What it signifiede
And she his dremys right thus expouned
The tre quod she the galowis is to mene
And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rayn
And Phebus With his bemes so clene

Be tolleneth the ſonne lemys ſoth to ſayñ
Thou ſhalt anhangidy be ſadir certeyñ
Rayn ſhal the waſſhe and ſonne ſhal the dreye
Thus ſhe warnedy ſul plat and ſul pleyñ
His doughter that callydy was Thanye
An hangidy was Creſus the proudy kyngy
His ryal trone mighte hym not auaylle
Tragedy is noy other maner thingy
Me thy m ſyngrye ne bewayle
For that fortune alday wol aſſayle
With vnwaar ſtrook the regnes that be proude
For whenne men truſt in her thay wol ſhe fayle
And couer her brighte face vnder a cloude

Here endith the Monkes tale.

SO quody our ooſte ſyr nomore of this
That ye haue ſaidy is ynough ywis
And mykyl more for mykyl heuynes
Is right ynough to mykyl folk I ges
Your talis doon vs no diſport ne game
Wherfore ſir Monk Thiers Adam be your name
I pray yow hertly tel vs ſumwhat elles
For ſikirly nere clynkyngy of your bellis
That on your brydil hongyn on euery ſyde
Be heuyn kyngy that for vs alle dyde
I ſholde or this fallen doun for ſlepe
Al though the ſlough hadde neuyr be ſo depe
Thanne hadde your tale al be toldy in veyñ
For certenly as thyſe clerkis ſeyñ
Where as a may may haue noy audience

Not [illegible]ith it to telle his sentence
And wel I woot the substaunce is in me
If ony thing shal wel reportyd be
Sire say sum what of huntyng I you pray
May quod this monk I haue no lust to play
Nor lete anothir telle as I haue told
Than spak our ost with mylde speche & bolde
And sayde to the Nonnys preest anone
Com ner thou preest com hidir sir Johh
Tel vs suche thing as may our hertis glade
Be blithe though thou ryde vp on a Jade
What though thy hors be foul and lene
If he wol serue the recke the not a bene
Loke that thy herte be mery euyr moo
Yes sir quod he so moot y goo
But I be mery I wis I wol be blamyd
And right anon his tale he hath attamyd
And thus he sayde to vs euerichon
This swete preest this goostly man sir Johh
Here endeth the prologe of the Nonnys preest
And here begynneth his tale.
A Poure wydow som deel stept in age
Was somtyme dwellyng in a cottage
Besyde a groue stondyng in a dale
This wydow of whiche I telle my tale
Syn that day that she was last a wyf
In pacience ledde a ful simpyl lyf
For litel was her catel and her rent
By husbondrye suche as god her sent

She fondy her self and eek her doughtryn two
Thre large sowys hadn she and nomo
Thre kyne and eek a shep that highte malle
Ful soty was her hour and eek her halle
In whiche she eet meny a slendir meel
Of poynaunt sauce nedith her neuer adeel
Ne deynte morsel passedy thorwh her throte
Her diet was accordaunt to her cote
Repleccion ne made hir neuer syke
A temperat diet was hir phisyke
And exercise and hertis sufficiaunce
The gowte lete her no thingy sorto daunce
Ne replexion shente not her hedy
No wyn drank she whyte ne redy
Her bordy was most seruydy with whit & blak
Milk & brouy bredy in whiche she fondy no lak
Salt bacon and somtyme an ey
For she was as a maner of a dey
A yerdy she hadde enclosidy al aboute
With drye stickis and dichidy without
In whiche she hadde a cok highte chauntecleer
In al the londy of crowbyngy nas his peer
His vois was merier than the mery orgon
On masse dayes that in chirche goon
Wel sikerer was his crowbyngy in his loge
Than is a clocke or in ony abbey ay orloge
By nature he crewe eche assencion
Of the equynoxion in the touy
For whenne degrees .xv. were ascendidy

Than wolde he that it myghte not be amendid
His comb was redder than the fyn coral
And batelid as it had be a castel wal
His bil was blak as ony geet it shod
Lik asure were his leggis and his tod
His naylis whitter than the lily flour
And lik the burned gold was his colour
This gentil cok hadde in his gouernaunce
Seuen hennys to do with his plesaunce
Whiche were his sistris and his paramours
And wonder lik to hym as of colours
Of whiche the fairist hewid in the throte
Was clepid faire damysel Pertelote
Curteys she was discreet and debonaire
And compenabil and hadde hir self so faire
Syn that tyme that she was seue nyght old
That trewlich she hath the herte in hold
Of chauntecleris lokyng in every lith
He louith her so that wel was hym therwith
Whan the bright sonne gan to sprynge
Hit was a melodye to here hem synge
In swete accorde my leef is faste in londe
For that tyme as I haue vnderstonde
Bestis and briddis coude speke and synge
And so it fil that in the dawenynge
Chauntecleer among his wyues alle
Sat on his perche that was in the halle
And next hym sat his faire Pertelote
This chauntecleer gan to grone in his throte

As a man in his dreme is wrechidly sore
And when that Pertelot thus herde hym rore
She was agast and sayde herte dere
What eyleth yow to grone in this manere
Ye be a verry sleper fy for shame
And he answerde thus Madame
I pray yow that ye take it not in greef
By god I mette I was in such myschief
Right now that myn herte is sore a fright
Now god my sweven he rede a right
And kepe my body out of foul prisoun
I mette that I romed up and doun
Within yme oure yerde where I salw a best
Was lyk an hounde & wolde haue made a reste
Upon my body and wolde haue had me ded
His colour was betwixt yelow and red
And tippyd was his tayl and bothe his eris
With blak unlike the remenaunt of his heris
His snowte smal with glowyng eyen tweye
Yet for his loke almost for feer I deye
This causith me my gronyng doutles
Pardey quod she fy for shame hertles
Alas quod she for by god above
Now haue ye lost myn herte & al my loue
I can not loue a coward by my feyth
For certis what so ony woman seith
We alle desiren yf it myght be
To haue husbondis hardy wyse and fre
And secret and no nygard ne no fool

Me hym that is agast of euery thoȝt
Me none auaumbour be godȝ aboue
Holȝ durst ye sey for shame vnto your loue
That ony thingȝ mighte make you a feerde
Haue ye no mannys herte & haue a berde
Allas andȝ comme ye be a ferdȝ of sweuenys
No thingȝ but vaine godȝ woot in sweuene is
Sweuenys engendren of replecioũ
Andȝ of fyme andȝ of complecioũ
Whan humours been to habundaunt in a wight
Certis swich dremes whiche ye haue met to nyght
I telle yoȝ trouthe ye may truste me
Cometh of your superfluyte & rede colour parde
Whiche cause folk to drede in her dremys
Of arwes andȝ of fyre with rede lemys
Of grete bestes that wole hem byte
Andȝ alle as a Jape not worth a myte
Right as the humour of Melancolye
Causeth many a man in slepe to crye
For feer of grete bolis andȝ beris blake
Oȝ ellis blake deuylles wol hem take
Of humours coude I telle also
That worken a man in slepe mykyl wo
But I wil passe as lightly as I can
Lo Caton whiche that was a wyse man
Sayde he not thus. do no force of dremys
Nowe sir quod she when we fle fro the bemys
For goddis loue as taketh sum laxatif
Up peryl of my soule andȝ my lif

That hotte of coler and of malencolye
Ye purge you and for ye ſhul not tary
Though in this towy be non apotecary
I ſhal my ſelf tho herbis teche yow
That ſhal be for youre hele & for your prow
And in your yerd tho herbis ſhal I fynde
The whiche haue of her proper kynde
To purge you benethe and eke aboue
Forget not this for goddis owen loue
Ye be right colerik of complexion
Where the ſonne is in his aſcenſion
Me fynde ye not of humours hote
For yf ye do I dar ley a grote
Thame ſhal ye haue a feuyr terciane
Or an agew that may be your bane
A day or two ye ſhul haue digeſtyuys
Of wormys or ye take your laxatiuys
Of laureal centory and of fumetory
Or ellis of the elderberyes that growyn ther by
Of Catapuce or of gaytre beryes
Of herbe yue growyng in your yerd that mery is
Pluk hem vp as they growe and ete hem yn
Be mery huſbond for your fadir kyn
Dredith no deme I can ſay you nomore
Madame quod he grammercy of your lore
But natheles as touching Cato
That of wiſedom hath ſuche a gret renoun
That he hath no dremys for to drede
Be good mey may in olde bokis rede

Of many a may more of auctorite
Thay euyr Caton was so moot y the
That al the veuers sayth of his sentence
And haue wel founde le epprience
That deemys be significacioums
As wel of ioye as of tribulacions
That folk enduryn in this lyf present
Ther nedith to make of this non argument
The verry preef shewith it in dede
One of the gretteste auctor that men rede
Saith thus that sumtyme two felowis went
On pilgremage in ful good entent
And happid so they comyn in a toun
Where as ther was suche congregacon
Of pepyl and eke of streit herbegage
That they ne fond as mykyl as a cotage
In whiche they bothe mighte ly loggid be
Wherfore they muste of necessite
As for that nyght departe companye
And eche of them goth to his osterye
And took his loggyng as it wold falle
That on of hem was loggid in a stalle
Ferre in the yerde with oxen of the plow
That other may was loggid wel ynow
As was his auenture or his fortune
That vs gouernyth al as in comune
And so it be fyl longe or it were day
This may mette in his bed there that he lay
That his felow gan to hym calle

And sayde allas for in an oxes stalle
This nyght shal I lie murdred there I ly
Nowe helpe me dere brother or I dy
In alle haste com to me he sayde
This man out of his slepe for fere abreyde
And whanne he was waked of his slepe
He turned hym and took of this no kepe
Hym thoughte his dreme was but a fantyme
Thus twyse in his slepe dremyd he
And atte thridde tyme yet his felaw
Cam as hym thoughte & sayde I am nowe slaw
Beholde my blody woundis depe and wyde
Aryse vp erly in the morow tyde
And atte west gate of the town quod he
A cartful of dung there shalt thou se
In whiche my body is hid ful pryuely
Do that carte areste boldely
My gold caused my deth soth to sayn
And tolde hym euery poynt how he was slayn
With a ful pitous face pale of hewe
And trust wel his dreme he fond right trewe
For on the morow as sone as it was day
To his felawis yn he took the way
And whanne that he came to the oxis stalle
After his felaw he gan to calle
The Osteler answerd hym anon
And sayde sire your felaw is gon
As sone as day he went out of the town
This man gan fallyn in suspescioun

Remembrynge of his dremys that he mette
And forth he goth no lenger wolde he lette
Vnto the Westgate of the towne and fonde
A dongh carte as it were to donge londe
That was arayd in the same wyse
As ye haue herd the dede may deuyse
And with hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and Justice of this felonye
My felaw murdred is this same nyght
And in this carte he lieth gappynge vpright
I crye out on the mynistres quod he
That shulde kepe and reule this cyte
Harow allas here lieth my felaw slayn
What shulde I more of this tale sayn
The people out sterte and cast the carte to grounde
And in the myddel of the dongh they fonde
The dede man that murdred was al newe
O blessful god that art so good and trewe
Lo holy that thus hath bewreyed murdre alwey
Murdre wol out that se we day be day
Murdre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To god that Just is and resonable
That he ne wol it suffre holy to be
Though it abyde a day or two or three
Murdre wol out this is my conclusion
And right anon the mynystris of the toun
Han hent the carter and so sore hym pyned
And eke the Osteler so sore engyned
That they beknewe hir wikkednesse anon

And Wevery ay hangíth be the neckke hoon
Here may ye ſe that deemys hey to dede
And certis in the ſame liſ J rede
Right in the neyxt chapitre aftir this
J gab not ſo haue J ioye and blis
Tho mey that Wolde haue paſſith ouer the ſe
For certayn cauſis in to a fer contre
Yf the Wynd ne hadde be contrarye
That made hem in a cyte to tarye
That ſtoodh ful mery ſip on ay hauey ſyde
But on aday ayens ay eryn tyde
The Wynd gay chaunge & bleW as hym lyſt
Joly and glady they Wentyn to reſt
And caſt hem ful erly forto ſayllé
But herkyn to that on may fil a greet meruayllé
The on of hem ſlepinge as he lay
He mette a Wonder deeme agayn the day
Hym thoughte a man ſtoodh by his beddis ſyde
And hym cõmaundidh that he ſholde abyde
And ſayde hym thus yf thou to morow Wende
Thou ſhalt be dreynt my tale is at ay ende
He Wook and tolde his feloW What he mette
And prayde hym his viage forto lette
As for that day he prayde hym forto abyde
His feloW that lay be his beddis ſyde
Gan forto laWhe and ſcornyth hym ful faſte
No deeme quoth he may do my herte agaſte
That J Wol lette forto ſo my thingis
J ſet nat a ſtraWe for thy deemyngis

For swevenys be but vanitees and Japes
Men metyn alday of ollis and of apes
And of many amase therwith al
And dremyn of thingis that nevir was ne shal
But sith I se that thou wolt here abyde
And thus stoutherly wilfully thy tyde
Sothly woot it verwith me and have goody day
And thus he took his leve & wente his way
But er he hadde half his cours ysayled
I not why ne what myschaunce it ayled
But astoellly the shippis botom to rent
And ship and may vnder the watir it went
In sight of othir shippis besyde
That with hym sayled atte same tyde
And therfore faire Pertelot so dere
By ensamplis olde maist thou here
That no man sholde be to recheles
Of dremys for I say the nonthles
That many a dreme ful sore is forto drede
Lo in the lyf of saint Kenelme I rede
That was Kenulphus sone the nobil kyng
Of mercurik hold Kenelme mette a thing
A litil or he were mordrid on a day
His mordir in his vision he say
His norice hym expounedy it eueridell
His sweuyn and bad hym kepe hym wel
Fro treson but he was but .vij. yeer oldy
And therfore litil tale he hath therof toldy
Of ony dreme so holy was his herte

Be god I hadde leuyr than my sherte
That ye hadde herdy his legendy as haue I
Dame Pertelot I say to yow trewly
Macrobius that writtith the visioun
In his book of the dremes of scipioun
Affermyth dremys andy saith that they been
Warnyngy of thingis that be aftir seen
And ferthermore I pray yow lokith wel
In the olde testament of daniel
Yf he heldy dremys ony vanite
Rede eke of Joseph andy there shul ye se
Wondris hey somy tyme but I say not al
Warnyngy of thingis that shul aftir fal
Lo of Egipt the kyngy that highte Pharao
His baker andy eke his boteler also
Whethir they felt non effect in dremys
Who so wol seke actis of sondry remys
May rede of dremys a wondir thingy
Lo Cresus whiche was of lide kyngy
Mette he not that he sat vp on a tre
Which signifiedy he sholde hangidy be
Lo Andromeda Hectors wif
That day that Hector sholde lese his lif
She dremydy in the same nyght beforn
How that the lif of Hector sholdy be lorn
Yf that day he wente hy to bataille
She warnedy hym but it might not auayle
He wente forto fighte natheles
But he was slayn anone of Achilles

But that tale is to longe to telle
And eek it is nygh day I may not dwelle
Shortly I say as for conclusion
That I shal haue of this aduision
Aduersite and I say furthermore
That I ne telle of laxatiuis no store
For they be venemous I woot it weel
I hem diffye I loue hem neuyr a deel
But now lete vs speke of mirthe & stynt al this
Madame Pertelot so haue I blis
Of o thing god hath me sent large grace
For whyn I see the beaute of your face
Ye be so skarlet reed about your yen
It maketh al my drede for to dien
For also sikir as in principio
Mulier est hominis confusio
Madame the sentence of this latyn is
Woman is mannys Joie and his blis
For whyn I fele an nyght your softe syde
Al be it that I may not on you ryde
For that our perche is made so narow alias
I am so ful of ioye and of solas
That I diffye both sweuene and dreme
And with that word he flew down fro the beem
For it was day and eek his hennys alle
And with a chuk he gan hem down calle
For he had founde a corn lay in the yerde
Real he was and nomore a ferde
He fedde Pertelot wel tenty tyme

And trade as ofte or it was pryme
He lokith as he were a gryny lioun
And on his toos he romedh vp and doun
Hym dynedh not to sette his feet to grounde
Ay he chuckidh whenne he hadde a corn y founde
And to hym thanne ran his wyuys alle
As ryal as a prince in his halle
Leue I this chauntecleer in his pasture
And after wol I telle of his auenture
Whan the moneth in the whiche the world began
That highte march that god first made man
Was complet and passid were also
Sith marche began thritty dayes and two
Befil that chauntecleer in al his pryde
His seuyn wyuys walkyng hym beside
Cast vp his yen to the bright sonne
That in the signe of taurus was I ronne
Twenty degrees & oon and sumwhat more
He knew be kynde and be non other lore
That it was pryme & crew with a blisful steuyn
The sonne he sayde is clombe vp to heuyn
Fourty degrees & one & sumwhat more I wys
Madame pertelote my worldis blis
Harkyn how this blisful briddis synge
And se the fresh flouris how they sprynge
Ful is myn herte of reuel and solas
But sodenly hym fil a sorowful cas
For euer the latter ende of ioye is woo
And comynly ofter tyme it fallith so

And if a vethour wolde faine endite
He in a cronycle myghte saufely wryte
As for a souereyn notabilyte
Now euery wyseman herkyn to me
This story is al so trewe I vndertake
As is the book of launcelot delake
That wommen holden in ful gret reuerence
Now wol I turne ayen to my sentence
A col fox ful of sleyghte and iniquite
That in the grene hadde wonen yeris thre
Be high ymaginacion aforn cast
The same nyght thorough the hegge braste
Into the yerd there chauntecleer the faire
Was wont and eke his wyues to repaire
And in a bed of wortis stille he lay
Til it was passid vndren of the day
Waytinge his tyme on chauntecleer to falle
As gladly doon thise homicides alle
That in a wayte ligge to murdre men
O false murderour vnclyngn in thy den
O newe Scariot and newe Genylion
Fals dissimilour o greek Synon
That broughtist troye bittirly to sorwe
O chauntecleer acursid be the morwe
That thou in thy yerde fley fro the bemys
Now were ful wel warnyd be thy dremys
That ilke day was perilous to the
But that god afore woot muste nedis be
After the opinion of certeyn clerkis

Witnes of hym that ony clerk is
That in scole is gret altercacion
In this mater and gret disputacion
And hath ley of an hundrid thousandy may
But I ne can not bulte out the breme
As can the holy doctour Austyn
Or boece or the bisshop Bradwardyn
Whether that goddis Wil aforn Wetynge
Streynyth me needles to do a thing
Medly clepe I simpyl necessite
Or yf the fre chois be graunted me
To do that same thing or do it nought
Though god forwoot it or it Was Wrought
Or yf his Witynge streyneth neuyr a deel
But by necessite condicionel
I Wol not haue to doon of suche matere
My tale is of a cok as ye shul here
That took his counceyl of his Wif With sorwh
To Walke in the yerde up on the mowh
That he hadde met the dreme as I you tolde
Womenmys counceyllis be ful ofte colde
Womanmys counceyl brought vs first to Woo
And made adam fro paradis to go
There as he Was ful mery and Wel at ese
But for I not Whom I mighte displese
Yf I counceyl of Wommen Wolde blame
Passe ouer I sayde it in my game
Redith auctours Where they trete of suche matere
And What they say of Wommen ye mowe here

These been the wikkis wordis and not myn
I say no harm of no woman dewyne
Faire in the sonde to bathe hir merily
Lith Pertelot and alle hir susteris by
Ayens ye sonne and chaunteclere so shon
Sang merier than the marmayde in the see
For Phisalogus sayth certainly
How that they syngen wel and merily
And so be fil as he cast his ye
Among the wortis on a botterflye
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe
No thing than list hym forto crowe
But cryde anon cok cok and up he sterte
As man that was affrayed in his herte
For naturelly a best desirith to fle
Fro his contrary yf he may it se
Though he neuer had seyn it erst with his ye
This chaunteclier whan he gan hym aspye
He wolde haue fled but that the fox anon
Sayde gentyl sire allas what wyl ye don
Be ye affraid of me that am your frende
Certis sire than be ye vnkynde
Jf J to you wolde harm or vilonye
J am not comyn your counseyl to aspye
But trewly the cause of my comynge
Was only to here how ye syngen
For trewly ye haue as mery a stevyn
As ony aungel hath that is in hevyn
Therwith ye haue of musik more felynge

Than hadde kyng of eny that any syngh
My lordy your fadir godi his soule blis
And eke your moder of hir gentilnes
Haue in my hous be ful wel at ese
And certes sire fayne wolde I you plese
But for myn speke of syngynge I wolde fey
So moot I brouke myn yen eche dey
Saue you ne herdy I neuer may so synge
As didy your fader in the morwynge
Certis it was of herte al that he songh
And for to make his kyng the more strongh
He wolde so peyne hym that with both his yen
He muste wynke so lowde he muste crey
And stondyn on his tiptoos therwith alle
And streche forth his necke longh and smal
And eek he was of suche discrecion
That ther was noman in no region
That hym in songh or wisdom mighte passe
I haue wel redy dan burnel the asse
Among his bers ther was a cok
For a prestis sone yaf hym a knok
Vp on is leggis while he was yongh & nyce
He made hym for to lese his benefice
But ther is no comparison
Bet why the wisdom and discrecion
Of your fadir and of his subtilyte
Now syngith sire for saint charite
Lete se can ye your fadir countirfete
This chauntecleer his wyngis gan bete

As may that coude nat his reson aspye
So was he rauysshed with his flaterye
Allas ye lordis many a fals flatowr
Is in your court and meny a fals losingour
That plese you more be my feith
Than he that soothfastnes vnto you saith
Redith ecclesiast of flaterye
Be waar ye lordis of her trecherye
This chauntecleer stoody hye vp on his toos
Streching his necke and held his yen cloos
And gan to crowe lowde for the nonys
And dan russell start vp at onys
And by the gorge hente chauntecleer
And on his back toward the wode hym beer
For yet was ther noman that hym sued
O destene that mayst not be eschued
Allas that chauntecleer fley fro the bemys
Allas his wyf raught not of dremys
And on a friday fil al this myschaunce
O venus that art goddy of plesaunce
Sithnes that thy seruant was this chauntecleer
And in thy seruise dide al his poweer
More for delite than the worlde to multiplye
Why woldist thou suffre hym on thy day to dye
O Gaufryde dere maistir souereyn
That whan the worthy kyng Richard was slayn
With shot complemedist his deth so sore
Why ne hadde Inowh thy sentence & thy lore
The friday forto chidery as didy ye

For on a friday ſhortly ſlayn was he
Thame wolde I ſhewe you holl that I coude pleyn
For chauntecleer and for his peyn
Certis ſuche crye ne lamentacion
Was of ladies maad whenne Ilion was wonne
And pirrus with his brighte ſwerd
Whan he hent kyng Priam by the berd
And ſlouh hym as ſaith Eneydos
As maden alle the hennys in the cloos
Whenne that they hadde of chauntecler the ſighte
But ſouverenly dame Pertelote gan to ſhrighte
Ful louder than did hasdrubalis wif
Whenne that her huſbond hadde loſt his lif
And that the romayns hadde brent Cartage
She was ſo ful of turment and of rage
That wilfully in to the fire ſhe ſterte
And brende her ſelf with a ſtedfaſt herte
O wofful hennys ſo that cryden ye
As whenne that nero brent the cyte
Of rome criden the Senatours wyues
For that her huſbondis ſholde leſe her liues
Withoutyn gilt nero hath hem ſleyn
Now wol I turne to my tale agayn
This ſely widowe and hir doughtris two
Herden the hennys crye and make woo
And out at the dore ſterte they anone
And ſaw the fox toward the wode goon
And bar vp on his bak the col a bey
And criden out and haroh and welaway

At ta the foy and aftir hym they renne
And eek with staues meny other menne
Ray colle our doggis talbot and garlonde
And malkyn with her distaf in her honde
Ray coll and eek the fery hoggis
For they so sore a ferdy were of the doggis
And sholdeyng of men & of wommen eek
They ronne so her herte thought to breke
They yellyn as fendis doon in helle
The doggis crien as men wolde hem quelle
Out of the hyuys cam the swarm of bees
The gees for feer fley ouer the trees
So hidous was the noyse a benedicite
Certis Jacke Straw ne his meyne
Ne made neuir shoutes half so shrylle
Whan that they wolde ony flemyngis kylle
As that day was maad vp on the foy
Of bras they blew the trompes & of boy
Of horn & boon in whiche they pouppyd
And therwith they shriked and shoutyd
It semed as though heuyn shulde falle
Nowe godemen I pray you harkyn alle
Lo how fortune turneth sodenly
The hope and the pryde of her enmy
This cok that lay vp on this foxis bak
In al his drede vnto the foy he spak
And sayde sire yf I were as ye
Yet shulde I say as wis god help me
Turneth ayein ye proude cherlis alle

A lewy pestilence vp on you falle
Nold any I come vnto this bodies syde
Magre your hedy the colt shal here abyde
I wol hym ete in feith andy that anoñ
The foy answerde in feith it shal be doñ
Andy as he spak the wordy al sodenly
This colt brak from his mouth deliuerly
Andy high vp on a tree he fly anoñ
Andy whenne the foy sawe that he was goñ
Alas quody he o chauntecler alas
I haue do to you gret trespas
In as muche as I made you a ferde
Whenne I you hente & brought out of your yerde
But syre I didy hit not in no wickidy entent
Cony doucy & I shal telle you what I ment
I shal you say soth so godi helpe me so
May thame quody he I shrewe vs both the two
Andy first I shrewe my self both blody & bonys
Yf thou begyle me ofter thame onys
Thou shalt nomore with thy flaterye
Do me synge with a wynkyngy ye
For he that wynketh whanne he sholde se
As wisly godi lete hym neuyr the
May quody the foy godi yeue hym myschaunce
That is so vndiscrete of gouernaunce
That iangelith whey that he sholde haue pees
Lo suche it is forto be recheles
Andy negligent andy truste on flaterye
But ye that holdyn this tale a folye

As of a fox and a cok and an hen
Taketh the moralite good men
For saint Poule saith al that writyn is
To our doctryne is writyn y wis
Taketh the fruyt & let the chaf be stille
Now good men yf that it be your wille
As seith my lorde so make vs alle goodmen
And bringe vs to his high blisse amen
Here begynneth the Maunciples prologh.

Hoot ye not where ther stondith a litil toun
Which that is clepid hob vp and doun
Under the blee in Caunterbery they
There gan our oste to iape and to pley
And sayde sires what dyn is in the myre
Is ther nomen for praier ne for hire
That wol awake our felaw behynde
A theef mighte hym ful lightly robbe & bynde
See how he nappeth see for cokkis bonys
How he wol falle from his hors attonys
Is that a cook of london with myschaunce
Do hym comfort he kniweth his penaunce
For he shal telle a tale be my fey
Al though it be not worth a botel hey
Awake thou cook qd he god yeue the sorwe
What eyleth the to slepe be the morwe
Hast thow had fleen al night or art thou dronk
Or hast thou al night with som quene y swonke
So that thow maist not holde vp thy hed
This cook that was ful pale & no thing red

Sayde our hooſt ſo godʒ my ſoule blis
Ther is falle on me greet henynes
Not I nat why, me were leuer to ſlepe
Than the beſt galon of wyne in chepe
Wel quodʒ the Mauncipyl yf it may do the eſe
To the fir wok andʒ to no wight diſpleſe
Whiche that here ridʒ in this company
Andʒ that our hooſt wil of his curteſy
I wol as nowe excuſe the of thy tale
For in goodʒ feith thy viſage is ful pale
Thyn yen daſewen ſothly as me thinkith
Andʒ wel I woot thy breth ful foule ſtynketh
That ſhewith wel thou art not wel diſpoſidʒ
Of me certeyn thou ſhalt not be gloſidʒ
Se howe he gapith lo this dronkyn wight
As though he wolde ſwelle anon right
Holdʒ cloos thy mouth be thy fader kyn
The deuyl of helle ſette his foot ther yn
Thy curſidʒ breth infectith vs alle
Fy ſtynkyng ſwyn foule moot the befalle
Takith hede fires of this luſty man
Nowe ſwete fire wol ye iuſte atte fan
Therto me thinkith ye be wel y ſhape
I trowe that ye haue dronkyn wyn of ape
Andʒ that is wher men pleyen atte ſtraw
Andʒ with his ſpeche the wok wexidʒ al wraw
Andʒ on the Mauncipyl he gan to nodde faſte
For lak of ſpeche adown the hors hym caſte
Where as he lay til that men hym vp took

This was a feire chaunſaunce of a cooke
Alas that he ne had holde hym be his ladyle
Andy er that he ayen were in his ſadyle
Ther was a gret ſhouyng both to and fro
To lifte hym vp and myckyl care and woo
So vnbeldy was this ſely pallyd goſt
And to the maunciple thay ſpak our oſt
Be cauſe that drynke hath dominacion
Vp on this may be my ſauacion
I trow ledely wil he telle his tale
For were it wyne or oldy moiſty ale
That he hath dronkyn he ſpekith ſo in his noſe
And ſnefith faſte and eke he hath the poſe
He hath alſo to do more than ynough
To kepe hym on his Capyl out of the ſlough
And if he falle from his Capil eft ſone
Thay ſhul be alle haue ynough to done
In liftyng vp his dronkyn corps
Tel on thy tale of hym y make I noforce
But yet maunciple in ſeyth thou art to nyce
Thus opynly to reproue hym of his vice
Another day he wyl pauenture
Reclayme the and bryngе the to lure
I mene he ſpeke wol of ſmale thyngis
And forto pynche at thy rekenyngis
That were not honeſt yf it cam to the preef
Quod the Maunciple that were a gret myſchief
So myghte he bryngе me in to the ſnare
Yet hadde y leuer paye for the mare

Whiche he rideth on thay he shalde with me stryue
I wol not wreth hym so mote I thryue
That I spak I sayde it but in bourde
And wite ye wel I haue here in my gourde
A draughte of wyne ye of a ryght grape
And right anone ye shul se a good Jape
This wook shal drynke therof yf I may
Vp on my lif he wol not say nay
And certenly to tellen as it was
Of this kysse the wook dranke faste alas
What nedeth it he dranke ynough tofore
And whan he hadde pupped in his hore
To the maunciple he took the gourde agayn
And of the drynke the wook was ful fayn
And thanked hym in suche wyse as he coude
Thay gan our oste to laughe wonder loude
And sayde I se wel it is necessary
Where ye we goon good drynke with vs to carry
For that wol turne rancour and disese
To accorde and loue ¶ many a word to pese
O barus blessed be thy name
That so canst turne ernest in to game
Worshipe and thank be to thy dyete
Of that matter ye get nomore of me
Tel on thy tale thou maunciple I the pray
Wel sire quod he herkeneth what I say

¶ Here endeth the Maunciples prologe.

¶ And beginneth his tale.

Whan Phebus dwelled here in erthe a doun

As olde bokis makyn mencion
He was the most lusty bachelour
Of al the worlde and eke the beste archer
He slough Phyton the serpent cs he lay
Slepyng ayens the sonne vp on a day
And many another nobil dede
He with his bowe wrought as men mowe rede
Pleye he coude on euery mynstralcye
And syngen that it was a melodye
To here of his cleer voys the sonyn
Certes the kyng of Thebes amphion
That with his songe walled the cyte
Coude neuer synge half so wel as he
Therto he was the semeliste man
That is or was sith the worlde began
What nedith it his feture forto discryue
For in this worlde was ther non so fair a liue
He was therwith fulfillid of gentilnesse
Of honour and of parfyt worthynesse
This Phebus that was flour of bachelerye
As wel in fredom as in chiualrye
For disporte in signe eek of victorye
Of Phyton so as telleth vs the story
Was wont to bere in his honde a bowe
Now hadde this Phebus in his hous a crowe
With ynne a cage y fostrid many a day
And taughte it speke as men teche a Jay
Whit was this crowe as is a snow whit swan
And countirfetid the speche of euery man

He coude what he sholde telle a tale
Ther was in al this worlde noy nyghtyngale
He coude he any hundrid thousandy deel
Synge so wonderly merily andy wel
Nolb hadde this Phebus in his hous a wyf
Whiche that he louedy more thay his lif
Andy nyght andy day didy euer his diligence
Here forto plese andy do her reuerence
Saue only the soth yf J shal sayy
Jelous he was andy wolde haue kept her feyy
For hym were loth rapidy forto be
Andy so is euery wight in suche degre
But al for nought for it auayliby nought
A goody wyf that is cleey of werk andy thought
Sholde not be kept in noy albe certeyy
Andy trewly the more it is in treyy
To kepe a shrewe for it wol nat be
This holde J for a tery nycete
To spille labour forto kepe wyuys
Thus writey olde clerkis in her lyuys
But nolb to purpos as J first begay
This worthy Phebus doth al that he ay
To plesey her wenyng thorolb suche pleasaunce
Andy for his manhoody & for his gouernaunce
That nomay sholde put hym fromy hir grace
But godyy it woot ther may nomay enbrace
As to distreyne a thingy whiche that nature
Hath naturelly set in a creature
Take ony briby andy put hyy in a Cage

And to al thyn entent and thy corage
To foster it tenderly with mete and drynke
Of alle deyntees that thou canst bethinke
And kepe it al so clenly as thou may
Al though his cage of gold be neuer so gay
Yet hath this brid by twenty thousand fold
Leuer in a forest that is wilde and cold
To ete wormys and suche wrecchidnes
For euer this brid wol do his besynes
To ascape out of his cage when he may
His liberte the brid desirith ay
Lest take a cat and fostre hir with mylk
And tender flesh and make her couche of silk
And lest her se a mous go by the wal
Anon she weyuith flesh and couche and al
And euery deynte that is in that hous
Suche appetit hath she to ete the mous
Lo here hath lust his dompnacion
And appetit flemyth discrecion
As the wolf hath also a vilens kynde
The leddist wolf that she may fynde
Or leest of reputacion that wol she take
In tyme when her lust to haue a make
Alle thyse ensamplis speke I be thyse mey
That been vntrewe and no thing by women
For men haue euer a licorous appetit
On lother thing to pfourme her delit
Than on her wyuys be they neuer so feir
Ne neuer so trewe ne so debonair

Flesh is so nelbfangil with myschaunce
That we ne konne in no thing haue plesaunce
That sownyth vnto vertu ony while
Thus Phebus whiche thought no gyle
Disceyued was for al his iolyte
For vnder hym another had she
A man of litil reputacion
Not worth to hym in no comparison
The more harm is it happith ofte so
Of whiche ther comyth muche harm and woo
And so befyl whyn Phebus was absent
His wyf anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman certis that is a knauysh speche
Forgyne it me that I you beseche
The wyse Plato saith as ye mowe rede
The word must nede accorde with the dede
Yf men shul telle properly a thing
The word must nedys be to the werkynge
I am a boistous man right thus say I
Ther is but litil difference trewly
Betwix a wyf that is of high degre
Yf of her body dishoneste she be
And a pore wenche other than this
Yf it so be they worke bothe amys
But that the gentil is in staat aboue
She shal be clepid his lady and his loue
And for that other is a polder woman
She shal be clepid his wenche or his lemman
And god it woot myn owen dere brother

Men leye as lolde that oon as that othir
Right so betwix any open tyraunt
And any out lawe or a theef exraunt
The same I say ther is no difference
To Alisaundir was tolde this sentence
That for the tiraunt is of gretter might
Be force of meyne to sle down right
And leeme hous & hoom & make al pleyn
Lo therfore is he clepid a capteyn
And for the outlawe hath but smal meyne
And may not do so gret harm as he
Me thynge a wntre to so greet myschief
Men clepe hym an outlawe or a theef
But for I am a man not textuel
I wol not of this tretе neuer a deel
I wol go to my tale as I began
Whan Phebus wyf had sent for her lemman
Anon they wroughten alle their lust solage
This whyte crowe that hynge ay in the cage
Beheld her work and sayde neuer a worde
And when hoom was come Phebus the lord
This crowe songe cuckow cuckow
What brid quod Phebus what syngist thow
Me were thou not wont so merily to synge
That to my hert it was a reioysinge
To here this nois allas what song is this
Be god quod he y synge not amys
Phebus quod he for al thy worthynes
For al thy beaute and thy gentilnes

For al thy ſongy andy thy mynſtralcye
For al thy Waytyngy bleridy is thyny ye
With one of litil reputacion
Not Worth to the in no compariſon
The mountaunce of a gnat ſo moot J thryue
For on thy bedy thy Wyf J ſalb hym ſWyue
What Wol ye more the crolbe anon hym tolde
By ſady tolkenys andy by Wordis bolde
Holb that his Wyf hadde doy her lecherye
Hym to gret ſhame andy to gret vilonye
Andy tolde hym eft he ſalb it With his yen
This Phebus gan a Weylbardy forto prien
Hym thoughte his herte breſt a tWo
His bolbe he bent andy ſet ther ynne a flo
Andy in his Jre he hath his Wyf ſlayn
This is the effect ther is nomore to ſayn
For ſorolb he brak his mynſtralſie
Both harpe andy lute/geterne andy ſalbtrie
Andy eek he brak his arolbis andy his bolbe
Andy after that thus ſpak he to the crolbe
Traitour quod he With tunge of ſcorpion
Thou haſt me brought to my confuſion
Alas that J Was Wrought Why nere J dedy
O dere Wyf O gemme of luſty bredy
That Were to me ſo ſady andy eek ſo trelbe
Nolb lieſt thou dy With face pale of helbe
Ful giltlees that durſte J ſWere itbys
O rakyl hondy to do ſo foule amys
O troubil Wit O Jre recheles

That vnauysid symplt giltles
O vantruste ful of suspecion
Where was thy wit and thy discrecion
O euery man be ware of rekilnes
Me troth no thing without witnes
Smyte not to sone or thou wite why
And be auysid wel and sikirly
Or ye do ony execucion
Vp on your ire for suspecion
Allas a thousand folk haue rekil ire
Fully forwoon & brought hem in the myre
Allas for sorow I wil my self sle
And to the crowe o false theef sayde he
I wol quyte anon thy fals tale
Thou songe whylom lik an nyghtyngale
Now shalt thou fals theef thy songe forgoon
Eke thy whyte fetheris euerichon
Me neuer in al thy lif shalt thou speke
Thus shulle men on a treytour be a wreke
Thou and thyn offspringe euer shul be blake
Me neuer swete noyse shul ye make
But euer crye ayens tempest and rayn
In tokyn that thorou the my wif is sleyn
And to the crowe he stert and that anone
And pulled of his whit fetheris euerichon
And made hym blak and reft hym al his songe
And eke his speche & out atte dore hym stongh
Vnto the deuyl whiche I hym betake
And for this caas be alle crowis blake

Lordingis by this ensampyl I wol you pray
Gedar and take kepe what I say
Me telleth neuer nomay in your lif
Hold that anothir may hath dighe his wyf
He wyl you hate mortally certeyn
Salamon as wyse clerkis sayn
Techith a may to kepe his tunge wel
But nathles thus taughte me my dame
My sone think on the crolde a goddis name
My sone keep wel thy tunge and kep thy frendy
A wickidy tunge is worse than a fendy
My sone from a fendy mey may hem blisse
My sone gody of his endles godnesse
Walkidy a tonge with teth and lippis eek
For may sholde hym auyse what he speek
My sone ful ofte forto mykyl speche
Hath many a may be spilt as clerkis teche
But for litil speche spoken auysedly
Is nomay shent to speke generally
My sone thy tonge sholdist thou restreyne
At al tyme but whan thou dost thy peyne
To speke of gody in honour here
The firste vertu sone yf thou wolt lere
Is to restreyne and kepe wel thy tunge
Thus lerne childreyn whey they be yongy
My sone of mykyl spekyng by auysidy
There lasse spekyng hadde I nold suffisidy
Comyth mykyl harm thus was me taughe
In mykyl speche syme wantith nought

Woste thou wherfore a Pakil longe seruith
Right as a swerdy for cuttith and forberuith
An arm a elbo my dere sone right so
A longe cuttith frendship al a elbo
A Jangelar is to gody abhominabil
Rede Salamon so wyse and honourabil
Rede Dauid and his psalmys rede Seneke
My sone spek not ne with thy hedy thou beke
Dissimyl as thou were deef yf that thou here
The Jangelour spekith of parlous matere
The flemyngy saith lerne yf that thou list
That litil Jangelyngy causith muche rest
My sone yf thou no wickidy wordy hast saidy
The dar not drede for to be by wraidy
But he that hath myssaidy J dar wel sayy
He may by no way clepe his wordy agayn.
Thingy that is saidy is saidy & forth it goth
Though hym repente or hym be neuer so loth
He is thralle to hym to whom he hath saidy
A tale for whiche he is nowe euyl apaidy
My son bewaar andy be noy auctor newe
Of tidingis whether they be fals or trewe
Where so thou come amongy hye or lowe
Kepe wel thy longe andy thynk on the crowe

Here endith the Maunciplis tale.

Here beaymeth the Parsonnys prology

By that the Mauncipil hady his tale endidy
The sonne fro the south syde is descendidy
So lowe that hit was to my sight

Degrees of fyue and twenty of highte
Ten atte clocke it was so as I gesse
For enleuyn foot a litil more or lesse
My shadow was at that tyme as there
Of suche feet as my lengthe partidy were
In .xj. feet equally of proporcion
Ther with the monys exaltacion
I mene libra alwey gan ascende
As we were entring atte tolbwys ende
For whiche our ost as he was wont to gye
As in this caas this ioly companye
Sayde in this wyse lordmgis euerichon
Now lakketh vs no tale more than on
Fulfillidy is my sentence and my decre
Who wol now telle a tale let se
Almost fulfillidy is myn ordenaunce
I pray to gody so yeue hym right goody chaunce
That telleth this tale to vs lustely
Sire preest quod he art thou a vicary
Or art thou a parson say soth be thy fey
Be what thou be breke not our pley
For euery man saue thou hath tolde his tale
Vnbokil and shewe vs what is in thy male
For trewly me thynkith be thy chere
Thou sholdest kouyete vp wel a greet matere
Tel vs a fabil anon for cokkis bonys
This parson answerde al attonys
Thou getist fabil non tolde for me
For poule that writith to Timothe

Repreueth hym that weyuey ſothfaſtneſſe
And techyth fables and ſuche wrecchidneſſe
Why ſholde I ſolde deaf out of my fiſt
Whyche I may ſolde whete yf me liſt
For whiche I ſay yf that thou liſt to here
Moralite and of vertuous matere
And thay yf ye wol yeue me audience
I wolde ful fayn at criſtis reuerence
Done you pleſaunce leefful as I can
But truſteth wel I am a ſotheryn man
I can nat geſte rum ram ruf by lettir
And god woot ryme holde I but litil bettir
And therfore yf ye liſt I wol nat gloſe
I wol you telle a mery tale in proſe
To knet vp al this feſt and make an ende
And Jheſu for his grace wit me ſende
To ſhewe you the wey in this viage
Of that ilke parfyt glorius pilgremage
That highte Jeruſalem celeſtial
And yf ye vouchesauf anone I ſhal
Begynne vp on my tale for whiche I preye
Tel your auys I can no better ſeye
But natheles this meditacion
I put it ay vnder correction
Of clerkis for I am not textuel
I take but the ſentence truſteth wel
Therfore I make proteſtacion
That I wol ſtonde to correction
Up on this wordy we haue aſſentid ſone

For as it semedy it was forto wne
To endey in sony vertuous sentence
And forto yeue hym place and audience
And lady to our oste he sholde to hym sey
That alle we to telle his tale hym preye
Our oste hadde the wordis for vs alle
Sir preest quod he nold fair moot you befalle
Saith what ye list and we shul gladly here
And with that word he sayde in this manere
Telleth quod he your meditacion
But hastith you the sonne wol a doun
Seth fructuous and that in litil space
And to do wel god sende you his grace
Here endith the parsons prologe.
And here begynneth his tale.

Our swete lordy godi of heuene that noman wil praisse but wil that we comen alle to the knowleching of hym and to the blisful lyf that is pardurable Amonesheth vs hy the prophete Jeremye that saith in this wyse/Stondeth vpon the weyes/And see and aye ye of olde pathis That is to seye of olde sentencis Whiche is goody weye/And walketh in that weye And that is refresshyng for your sowlis/Many ley the weyes spirituel that ledy folk to our lordy Jhesu Crist And to the regne of glorye/Of whiche weyes/ther is a ful noble weye and wel couenable Whiche may not fayle to may ne to woman that thurgh synne hath mysgoon fro the right weye of Jherusalem celestial/And this wey is clepedy pmtence/Of whiche may sholde gladly herkne and enquyre wyth al his hert to wete/What is

penytence or penaunce / And yet whens it is clepyd penytence / And how many maners ben the actions of worchyng of penytence / And how many spyces ther be of penitence / And whiche thynges behouen and appertenen to penytence / Saint Ambrose saith that penytence is the pleynyng of the man for the gilt that he hath do / And nomore to do ony thynge for the whyche hym ought to pleyne / And som doctor saith / that penaunce is the waymentyng of man that soroweth for his synne And pyneth hym self for he hath mysdon / Penytence with certayn circumstaunce is verray repentance of man that holdeth hym self in sorow and other peyne for his giltes / And for he shal be verray penitent / He shal first bewayle the synnes that he hath don / And stedfastly purpose in his herte to haue shrifte of mouth / And to do satysfaccyon and neuer for to do thyng for whyche hym ought more to bewayle or complayne / And to continue in goode werkes / or ellis his repentance may not auayle / For as saith saint Isodre He is a Japar and a gabber and not verray repentant / that efftsones doth thyng for whiche hym oweth to repente ne stynte to do synne / may not auaylle / But natheles men shold take hope that at euery tyme that men falleth be it neuer so ofte that he may aryse thurgh penytence yf he haue grace But certainly it is grete doubte / + For as seyth saint Gregore / whan he ariseth he out of his synne / that is charged of eyl vsage + And therfore repentaunte folk that stynte for to synne and for to lete synne or synne forlete hem / Holy chirche holdeth hem syker of her saluacyon + /

And he that ſymneth and verily repentith hym in his laſte
Holy chirche hopith his ſaluacon by the grete mercy of our
Lord Jheſu Criſt for his repentaunce, but take ye the ſikker
and certayn Waye. And nowe ſith I haue declared you
what thyngs is penaunce, Nowe ſhul ye vnderſtande that
ther be thre actions, the firſt is that a man be baptiſed after
that he hath ſymned ſaynt Auguſtyn ſaith but he be pen-
tent for his old ſynful lyf, he may not begynne the newe
clene lif. For yf he be baptiſed without penitence for his
old gilt, he reteyneth the marke of baptesme, but not the
grace ne the remiſſion of his ſynnys til he haue verray repen
taunce. Another defaute is that men done dedly ſynne after
they haue receyued baptesme. The thirde defaute is that men
falle in venyal ſynnes after her baptesme fro day to day.
Therof ſaith ſaynt Auſtyn that penaunce of goody and
humble folk is the penytence of euery day. The ſpices of pe-
naunce ben thre. That one of hem is ſolempne. Another is
comune. And the thirde is preue. That penaunce that is ſo
lempne is in two maners, as is to be put out of holy chirche
in lenton for ſlaughter of children & ſuche maner thinges.
Another is whan a man hath ſymned openly, of whiche
ſynne the fame is openly knowen in the contre and the holy
chirche by Jugement diſtreyneth hym for to do open pe
naunce. Some penaunce is that preſtes enioyne men comonly
in certayn caas as for to go parauenture naked or pilgri-
mage or barefoot. Preuy penaunce is that men doon al day
for preuy ſynnes of whiche be ſhriuen hem preuely and re-
ceyuen preue penaunce. Nowe ſhal thou vnderſtonde what
behoueth and is neceſſarye to euery preuy penitent. And

these stondeth in thre / Cõtricion of herte / Cõfession of mouth
And satisfaction / For whiche John Crisostom saith / Pe
nytence distreyneth to accepte benygnely euery peyne that
is hym enioyned with contricion of herte and shryfte of
mouth with satisfaction & worchyng of al maner humylite
And this is fruytful penance ayenst the thinges in whiche
we wraththyn our lordy Jhesu Crist / This is to saye delyte
in thinkyng / by recheles nes in spekyng / by wickedy and
synful wirchyng / Ayenst these wickedy giltes is penance
That may be likenedy to a tree. The rote of this tre is con
tricion that hydeth hym in the herte of hym that is veray re
pentante right as the rote of a tre hydeth hym in the erthe /
Of the rote of contricion spryngeth a stalke that bereth
braunches and leuys of confession and fruyt of satisfac
tion Of whiche crist saith in the gospel / Do ye digne fruyt
of penytence / For by this fruyt mey may knowe this tree
and not by the rote that is hydy in the herte of a may /
Ner by the braunches ne leeuys of confession / And ther
fore our lordy Jhesu Crist saith thus / by the fruyt of hem
ye shal knowe hem / Of thys rote springeth a seedy of
grace whiche seedy is moder of siketnes / And this seedy
is eger and hoot / the grace of this seedy springeth of gody
thurgh the remembraunce of the day of dome and of the
peynes of helle / Of this mater Salamon saith that in the
drede of gody a may forletteth his synne / The hete of this
seedy is the loue of gody and desiryng of the ioye perdura
ble / This hete drafeth the herte of may to gody and doth
hym hate his synne / For ther is nothyng that sauoureth
so sote to a childy as the mylke of his norice / ne nothyng

is to hym more abhominable than that mylk whan it is med
lyd with other mylk/ Right so the synful man that loueth
his syne/ hit semeth it is to hym most swete of ony thing
But fro that tyme that he loueth sadly our lord Jhesu Crist
and desireth the lyf perdurable/ ther is to hym no thyng
more abhominable/ For soth the loue of god is the salue of
god/ For whiche dauid the prophete saith/ I haue loued thy
salue and hated wickednes/ he that loueth god kepeth his
salue and his word/ This the prophete Danel Inspired
vpon the vision of Nabugodonosor whan he counceilled hym
to do penaunce/ Penaunce is of the tre of lyf to hym that it
receyuen/ And he that holdeth hym very penitent is blessed
after the sentence of salamon/ In this penitence or contri
cion may shal vnderstande foure thynges/ that is to saye
What is contricion/ And whiche ben the causes that meuen
a man to contricion/ And how he shold be contryte/ And
what contricon auayleth to the sowle/ Than is hit thus that
contricion is the very sorowe that a man restreyneth in his
herte for his symnes with sad purpose to shryue hym and
to do penaunce & neuer more to do syne/ And this sorowe
shal be in this maner as saith seynt bernard/ hit shal be
greuous and heuy and wel sharp and poynaunt in herte
First for a man hath agilted his lord and his creatour
And more sharp and poynaunt for he hath agilted his
fader celestial/ And yet more sharp & poynant for he hath
Bratht hym and agyle hym that bought hym that with
his precyous blood hath deliuered hym from the bondes of
syne and fro the cruelte of the deuyll and fro the peynes
of helle/ These causes that mane a man to contricion ben/ hi.

¶ First may shal remembre hym of his synnys / But
loke that remembrance be to hym no delyte by no weye
but grete shame and sorow for his gylte. / For Job
sayth / Synful men doon werkis worthy of confusion /.
And therfore sayth Ezechyel / I wyl remembre me
al the yeris of my lyf in bitternes of my herte /. And
god saith in the Apocalips / Remembre you fro whens
that ye be fallē /. For before the tyme that ye synned ye
were the childrey of god and lymys of the regne of
god /. But for your synne ye ben wayen thral and
foule membris of the fende. Hate of aungels / shlaundre
of holy chirche / and foody of the fals serpent / perpetuel
matier of the fyre of helle. And that more foul and
abhominalle for ye trespace as oft tyme as doth the
hound that torneth agayn to ete his owen spuyng. /
And yet fouler for your lenge contynuyng in synne
and your synfull vsage. / For whyche ye be rotey in
your synnys as a beest in his dung / Suche maner
thowghtis maketh a may a shamed for his synnys and
no delyte as saith the prophete Ezechiel. Ye shul re-
membre you of your weyes / and they shal displese yow
Sothly synnys ben the weyes that lede folk to helle. /
¶ The second cause that ought to make a may haue dis
daign of synne is thys as sayth Saint Petir / Who so
doth synne is thrall to synne. / And synne putteth a
may in grete thraldom. And therfore saith the prophete
Ezechiel I wente sorowful and had disdaign of my
self / Certes wel ought a may haue disdaigne of synne
and withdrawe hym fro that thraldom and vilonye. /

For to what saith Seneca in this matr He saith thus.
Though I wyste that neyther godȳ ne may sholdȳ nuer
knowe it / yet wold I haue desdaygñ for to do synne /.
And the same Seneca saith I am bozn to greter thynges
than to be thralle to my body / More thralle may no man
ne woman make of his body than yeue his body to synne.
And were it the foldlest chorle or the foldest woman that
liueth and lest of valew / yet he is chargedȳ and most foul
e most in seruitude euer fro the hyer degre that a man falleth
The more is he thral and more to godȳ and to the worldȳ
vile and abhominable / O goodȳ god wel ought a man haue
disdeygne of synne sith that thrugh that / there as he was
fre now is he made bonde / And therfore saith saint Austyn
If thou hast disdayn of thy seruaunt / If he agilt or synne
Haue thou ther no disdayn that thou thy self shouldest do
synne / Take reward of thyn olther valew / that thou ne be
to foul to thy self ne to thyne / Allas wel oughten they
that haue disdayn to be seruauntes and thrall to synne.
More to be a shamedȳ of hym self / that godȳ of his ordes
goodnes hath sette in high astate or yeue hym strength of
body / beaute / prosperyte / and bought hym fro the deth with
his herte bloody / that they so vnkyndely agaynst his gen-
tylnes quyten hym so vilonsly to slaughter of her olther
soldlis. O goodȳ godȳ ye women that ben of grete beaute
remembre you on the Prouerbe of Salamon / he saith He
lykneth a fair woman that is a fool of her body to a rynge
of goldȳ that is worn in the gwyn of a Solde. For right
as a solde wroteth in euery ordure / so wroteth she her beaute
in stynkynge ordure of synne /. ¶ The thirde cause That

ought to make a man to contrycion is drede of the day of dome / And the horrible paynes of helle / ✦ For as saith saint Jherome / At euery tyme that I remembre of the day of dome / I quake for what I ete or drynke or doo what so I do / euer me semeth the trompe sowneth in myn eres / ✦ Ryseth vp that ben dede and come ye to the Jugement ✦ O good god muche ought a man to drede suche a Juge-ment ther as we shal be alle / As saith saint Paule / ✦ Before the strayt Jugement of our lord Jhesu Crist / ✦ Where as we shal make a general cõgregacion / Where as no man may be absent / For certes ther auayleth non es-soyne ne none excusacion And not only that our fadres shal be Juged but eke oure werkes shal openly be knowen And that as saith seynt Bernard / There ne shal no pletyng auayle ne no sleyghte / We shal yeue rekenyng of euery ydle worde / ✦ There shal we haue a Juge that may not be deceyued ne corrupt And why for certes al our thoughtes be discouerd as to hym ne for prayer ne for mede he wyl not be corrupt / And also he sayth The wrath of god wil not spare no wight for prayer ne for yeft / And therfore atte day of dome ther is none hope / Wherfore as sayth seynt Anselme Ful grete anguysh shal the synful folk haue at that tyme Where shal be the sterne & wroth Juge sytting aboue / And vnder hym the horryble pyt of helle open to destroye hym that wolde not beknowen his synnys / Whiche synnes shulle openly be shewed before god and euery creature / And on the lyft syde mo deuylles than the herte may thynke for to haraye and drawe the synful soules to the pytte of helle ✦

And within the hertes of folk shal be the bityng conscience / and without forth shal his werkes accuse hym. Thenne shal the wrecched folle fle to hyde hym But certes he may not hyde hym he must come forth and shewe hym For certes as saith saint Jherome / the erthe shal caste him out of hym and the see also and the eyer also that shal be ful of thunder clappis and lightenyng / Wo sothly who so wil remembre hym of these thynges I gesse that his synnes shal not torne hym to delite but to grete sorwe for drede of the peyne of helle / And therfore saith Job to god Suffre lord that I may a whyle bewayle and bebere or I go withoutenyng to the derk erthe and couerid with derke; nes / the londe of miserye and of derknes where as is shadow of deth where as ther is none other ordenaūce but grisly drede that euer shal laste / Lo here may ye see that Job prayde respyte a whyle to bewepe & wayle his trespaas / For sothly one day to respyte is better than al the tresour of this world And for as muche as a man may acquyte hym self by sore god by penitence in this world and not by tresour / Therfore sholde he pray to god to yeue hym respyte a whyle to bewepe & bewayle his trespaas / For certes alle the sorwe that a man myght make fro the begynnyng of the worlde nys but a litel thyng atte regarde of the sorwe of helle /. The cause why that Job clepeth the londe of derknes / vnderstondeth that he clepeth hit londe or erthe / for it is stable and neuer shal fayle derkenes / For he that is in helle hath defaute of lyght naturel /. For certes the derk lyght that shal come out of the fyre that euer shall brenne shal torne hem al to peyne that be in helle / For it shewith hym all the

horrible deuylles that hem tormente couerdy with the derk-
nes of deth that ley the symnes that the wreachyd man
hath don / Whyche that destourbey hym to see the face of
god / Right as a derk cloude betwene vs and the sonne
Lorde of mysese by cause that ther be thre defautes ayenst
thre thynges that folk of this worlde haue in this pre-
sent lyf / that is to saye / honouris / delytes / and ry-
ches / Ayenst honour haue they in helle shame and con-
fusion / For wel ye wote they clepey honour the reuerence
that men doy to men / but in helle is none honour ne re
uerence / For certes nomore reuerence shal be there to a
kynge thay a knaue / For whiche god saith by the pro-
phete Jheremye / The folk that me dispysey shall be in
despyte / + Honour is eke cleped a grete lordshyp / there
shal no wight seruey other / but of harme and torment
Honour is eke cleped grete dignyte and highnes but
in helle shall they alle be fortroden with deuylles as god
saith / The horrible deuylles shulle goo and stempy vpon
hedes of dampned folk / And this is for as muche that
the hyer that they were in this present lyf the more they
shul be abated and desolated in helle / Ayenst the riches
of thys worlde / shal they haue mysese of pouerte / And
this pouerte shal be in .iiij. thynges In defaute of tresour
of whiche Dauid saith / The riche folk that embracey and
coueytey in al her herte ỳ riches of this worlde shulle slepe
in the slepyng of deth / as nothing shul they fynde in
there hondes of alle her tresour / And more ouer the mysese
of helle shal be in defaute of mete and drynke + For god
saith thus by Moyses / Ye shal be wasted with hunger +

And the birdes of helle shal deuoure hem with bitter deth.
And the galle of the dragon her morsellis / And ferther
ouer her mysese shal be in defaute of clothing for they shal
be naked in body as of clothing / Saue the fyre in whiche
they brenne and other fylthes / And naked shal they be
in sowle of alle maner vertues / whiche that is the clothing
of sowle / Where ben they theme the gay robis and the softe
shetis and fyn shertis / Lo what sayth god of hem by
the prophete Ysaye / that vnder hem shal be strawed mothes
and her couertours shal be of wormys of helle / And
furtherouer her mysese shal be in defaute of frendes for he is
not poure that hath goode frendes / but ther is no frende /
For neyther god ne goode creature shal be frende to hem
And euery of hem shal hate other with dedly hate / The
sones and the doughters shul rebelle ayenst the fader and
moder / And kynrede ayenst kynrede and chyden and des-
pisen eche other both day and nyght / as god saith by the
prophete Micheas / And the louyng children that some
tyme loueden so flesshely euerich of them wolde ete other yf
he myghte / For hold sholde they loue to gyder in the prynes
of helle / whan they hateden eche other in the prosperyte of
this lyf / For trust wel / her flesshly loue is dedly hate as
saith the prophete Dauid / who so loueth wickednes he ha-
teth his sowle / And who so hateth his olden sowle / Certes
he may loue none other wight in no maner / And therfore
in helle is no frendship but euer the more cursyng the more
chydyng and the more dedly hate is among hem / And
furtherouer they shal haue defautes of alle maner delites /
for why / For delites ben appetites of the wittes as sight /

heeryng / smellyng / sauouryng / and tollchyng.
But in helle her sight shal be ful of derknes / of smoke
and ful of teris And her heeryng ful of weymentyng
and of gruntyng of teth as sayth Jhesu Crist / Her
nostrellys shal be ful of stynkyng / And as sayth
Ysaye the prophete / Her sauouryng shal be full of bit
ter galle / And as touchyng her body it shal be couerydy
with fyre that neuer shal be quenchidy / And with wor
mys that neuer shal deye as god saith by the mouth of
Ysaye / And for as muche as they shul not wene that
they molde deye for peyne and by her deth fle fro peyne.
that may they vnderstondy in the wordy of Job that saith
that there is the shadold of deth / Certes a shadolde hath
a lyknes of the thyngy of whyche it is shadolwydy /
Right so fareth the peyn of helle / it is lyke deth for the
angwissh horryble / and why / For it peyneth hem euer
as though men sholdy dye anon / But certes they shal
not dye / For as saith seynt Gregore / to wreechidy ay
tyfs shal be deth without deth and ende without ende
and defaute without faylyng / For her deth shal alle
way lyue / And her ende shal euermore begynne / and
her defaute shal neuer fayle / And therfore sayth seynt
John the Euaungeliste / They shal folowe deth and
they shal not fynde hym and to desyre to dye and deth
shal fle fro them / And eke Job sayth That in helle is
none ordre of reule / And al be it so that gody hath
created alle in ryght ordre / and nothyng without
ordre / But alle thynges be ordeyned and nombred.

Yet nathèles they that be dampned be no thyng in ordre ne holde noy ordre/ For the erthe shal bere hem no fruyt/. For as the prophete Dauid saith/ God shal destroye the fruyt of the erth from hem/ Ne Water shal yeue hem no moysture ne the eyer no refresshyng/ ne the fyre no light For as saith saynt Gaasyle/ The bremyng of the fyre of this World shal god yeue to hem that ben dampned in helle But the light and the clerenes shal be yeuen in heuen to his children/ right as the good man yeueth breed to his children and bones to his hounde/ And so they shal haue none hope to escape/ And therfore speketh Job/ Atte last ther shal horrour and grisly drede dwelle Withouten ende Horrour is alle way drede of harme that is to come/ And thys drede shal euer dwelle in the hertes of hem that ben dampned. And therfore haue they lost al her hope for. Bycauses/ First for god that is her Juge shal be Withouten mercy to hem/ ne they may not plese hym ne none of his halowis/ ne may paye no thing for her raunson ne they haue no lops to speke to hym/ ne they mowe not fle fro peyne. And therfore sayth Salamon the Wicked man deyeth/ And When he is dede he shal haue none hope to escape from payne/ Who so Wolde Wel vnderstonde these peynes and bethynke hym Wel that he hath deseruyd the peynes for his synnes/ Certes he sholde haue more talent to syghe and Wepe than for to synge and for to playe/ For as sayth Salamon/ Who that hath the science for to knowe the peynes that ben establysshyd and ordeyned for synne he Wold forsake synne/ That science saith saynt Austyn maketh a man to Weymenten in his herte/.

The fourthe poynt that a man ought to make contri
cion fore / is the ſorouful remembraunce of the goody
that he hath lefte to do here in erthe and ellis the goody
that he hath lory / Sothly the goody werkis that he hath
lefte / eyther they be the goody werkis that he wrought
er he fyll in to dedely ſynne / or ellis the goody werkis
that he wrought whyle he lay in dedely ſynne / Sothly
the goody that he dyde before that he fyl in dedely ſynne
ley al mortyfyed aſtoned and dulled by the eft
ſynnyng / + The other werkes that he wrought whyle
he lay in ſynne ley vtterly dede as to the lyf perdurable
in heuen / + Thay thilke goody werkes that ley morty-
fyed by efte ſynnyng whyche goody werkes he dyde
whyles he was in charyte mowe neuer quyckey ayen
wythoute grete reſtreynt and wythdrawyng the
ſtrenges of mans corage and the meuynges in his
herte in ſuche maner as they ne ſkyppe out by anger
ne by ire / + And therof ſayth god by the mouth of
Ezechiel / That yf the right̄ful man reborne agayn
from his ryghtwyſnes and do wirche wickednes + /
ſhal he lyuen / nay / + For alle the goody werkis that
he hath wrought ſhulle neuer be in remembraunce / +
For he ſhal dye in his ſynne / And vpon that chap-
pytre ſayth Seynt Gregory thus that we ſhal vnder-
ſtande prycypally that whan we do dedely ſynne it is
nought + Neyther for to drawe in to memorye the goody
werkes that we haue wrought byfor̄ + For certes in the

Werkynge of dedely ſynne ther is no truſt to goody Werk
that we haue doy beforn / That is to ſaye as to haue ther by
the lyf pardurable in heuen / But ſothly the goody Werkes
that men doy Whyles they ley in dedly ſynne for as mykil
as they were doy in dedely ſynne they may neuer quyckey /.
For certes thyngis that neuer had lyf may neuer quyckey
And natheles al be it that they auayle not to haue the lyf
perdurable / yet auayley they to a leyggge of the peyne of helle
Or ellis to gete temporel riches / or ellis that goody Wyl ra;
ther enlumyne and lighten the herte of the ſynful man to
haue repentaunce /. And eke they auayle to a man to do
goody Werkis that the fende hath the laſſe poWer of his ſoWle
And thus the curteys lordy Jheſu Criſt Wil that no goody
Werke be loſt / For in ſumWhat it ſhal auayle / but for as
muche as the goody Werkis that men doy Whyles they ley
in goody lyf ley al mortifyedy by ſynne ſolowyng / And
eke ſith alle the goody Werkes that men doy Whylis they be
in dedly ſynne ley Witterly dede as for to haue the lyf perdu
rable / Wel may that man that no goody Werk doth ſyngy
that freſh neW ſongy / Jay tout perdu moy temps et moy
labour /. For certes it bereueth a man goodnes andy na;
ture andy eke the goodnes of grace / For ſoth the grace of
the holy goſt farith as fyre that may not be ydle / For fyre
fayleth anon as it leſeth his Werchyng / Than leſeth the
ſynful man the goodnes of glorye that only is behoten to
goody men that labourey andy Werkey / Wel may he be ſory
therme that oWeth al his lyf to goody as longe as he liueth
And eek as longe as he ſhal lyue / that no goodnes hath
to paye With his dette to goody to Whom he oWeth al his lyf

For truste wel he shal yeue accountys As sayth Saynt
Bernardy / of alle the goodes that haue be yeuyn hym in
this present lyf / Andy hold he hath dispendidy them / not
so muche that ther shal perysshe an heer of his heedy ne a
moment of an houre that he ne shal yeue therof a reckenyng
¶ The fyfthe thingy is that ought to meue a may to con
tricion is remembraunce of the passyon that our lordy
Jhesu suffridy for our synnys / For as saith seynt Ber
nardy / whylis that J lyue J shal haue remembraunce
of the trauayllis that our lordy Jhesu Crist suffrydy in
prechyngy / his werynes in trauelyngy / his temptacions
whan he fastedy / his longe walkyngis whan he praydy /
his teris whan he wepte for pyte of goody pepley / the woo
andy the shame andy the fylthe that meny seydey to hym /
of the foule spittyngy that meny spyttey in his face / of the
buffettys that meny yaf hym / of the foule mouthis andy
of the foule repreuys that meny to hym sayden of the nay
lis with the whiche he was nayledy to the crosse / andy
of alle the remenaunt of his passyon that he suffrydy for
mannys synne andy nothyngy for his gylt / Andy ye
shal vnderstande þ euery maner ordre of ordenaunce is
tornedy vp so downy / For it is soth that body andy resoy
andy sensualyte andy the body of a may be so ordeynedy /
that euerich of thyse foure thynges shul haue lordship
ouer that other as thus body sholdy haue lordship ouer
resoy / andy resoy ouer sensualyte andy sensualyte ouer
the body of may / But sothly may semeth al this ordre
of ordenaunce is turnedy vp so downy / / Andy therfore
theme for as mykyl as the resoy of may wyl

wil not be subget ne obeissaunt to gody that is lordy by right
Therfore leseth it the lordship that it sholdy haue in sen-
sualite andy eke ouer the body of may. Andy why for sen-
sualite rebelleth themme ayenst reson. Andy by that wey lo-
sith reson his lordship ouer sensualite andy ouer the body.
For right as reson is rebel to gody. Right so is sensualite
rebel to reson andy the body also. Andy certes thys ordre
naunce Andy this rebellion our lordy Jhesu Crist aboughte
dyon his body wel deer. andy herkeneth in whiche wyse.
For as mykyll themme as reson is rebell to gody therfore
is may worthy to haue sorowe andy to be dede. This suffridy
our lordy Jhesu for may after he was betraidy of his disci-
ple andy distreynedy & boundy so that the bloody braste out
at euery naylle of his hondes as saith saynt Augustyn.
Andy ferthermore for as mykyl as reson of may wil not
aunte sensualite whan it may. Therfore is may worthy
to haue shame. Andy this suffredy our lordy Jhesu Crist
for may whan they spitten in his visage. Andy ferther ouer
they for as muche as the caytyf body of may is rebell both
to reson andy to sensualite therfore it is worthy the dethe.
Andy this suffridy our lordy Jhesu Crist for may upon the
crosse. Where as ther was no parte of his body fre without
grete payne andy bitter passion Andy al this suffredy Jhesu
Crist that neuer forfetedy. To muche am I peynedy for tho
thinges that I neuer deseruydy andy to mykyl defouledy for
frendship that may is worthy to haue. Andy therfore may
the sinful may wel saye as seynt Bernardy seith Aarsidy
be the bitternes. For certis after diuerse discordauntes of
our wickednes was the passion of Jhesu Crist y ordeynedy

in diuerse thinges as thus / Certes synful mans soule be
traydy the deuyl by couetyse of temporel prosperite and scor
nys by disceyt whan he chesith flesshly delites / And is
tormentyd be Impacyence of aduersite and despet by ser-
uage in subiectyon of synne / And atte laste he is slayn
synally / For this discordance of synful man / Was Jhesu
Crist first betraid / and after that was he bounde that any
for to vnbynde vs of synne and of the peyne / Thenne was
he descourged that only sholdy be honouridy in alle thingis
and of al thingis / Thenne was his visage despyt that
ought to be desyred for to be seyn of al mankynde / In
whiche visage aungels desiren to loke / and therin was
vilemsly despette / Thenne was he scorned that nothingy
hady gilt / And synally thenne was he crucifyed & sleyn.
Thenne were complisshed the wordes of Ysaye that saith.
He was wounded for our misdedis and defouled for our
felonyes / Now sith that Jhesu Crist toke on hym self the
peyne of al our wickednes / mikyl ought synfull man to
wepe and to bewayle that for his synnes goddis sone of
heuen sholdy al this peyne endure. The .vj. thingy that
ought to meue a mā to contricion is the hope of thre thinges
that is to saye forgifnes of synne / and the yefte of grace
wel for to doo / And the ioye of heuen with the whiche godly
shal guerdon many for his goody dedes / And for as muche
as Jhesu Crist yauyth vs the yeftis of his grace and of
his soueraryn bounte / Therfore is he cleped Jhesus naza-
renus Rex Judeorū / Jhesus is for to saye sauyour or saua-
cion on whom men shul hopen to haue forgeuenes of syn-
nys / Whyche that is properly sauacion of synnys.

And therfore saith the angel to Joseph/ Thou shalt clepe his name Jhesus that shal saue his peple of her synnys. And herof saith seynt Peter/ Ther is none other name vnder heuyn that is yeuyn to ony man by whiche a man may be sauyd but only Jhesus/ Nazarenus is as moche for to saye as florisshyng/ in whiche a man shal hope that he that yeuyth hym remission of synnys shal also yeue hym grace wel for to do/ For in the flour is hope of fruyt in tyme co; myng/ And in forȝeuenes of synne hope of grace wel to do I was atte dore of thyn herte saith Jhesus and clepeth for to entre/ he ꝑ openeth to me shal haue forȝeuenes of synnys I wil entre in to hym by my grace/ and soupe with hym by the goode werkis that he shal do/ whiche werkis ben the fode of god/ And he shal sope with me by the grete iope that shal be youen to hym/ Thus shal man hope that for his werkis of penaunce god shal yeue hym his regne as he be; hoteth hym in the gospel/ Now shal man vnderstande in what maner shal be his contricion/ I saye hit shal be vny; uersal and total/ that is to saye a man shal be sorry repen taunt for alle his synnys that he hath don in dede of his thought/ For delite is perilous/ For ther be two maners of consentynges that one of hem is clepedy consentyng of af fection/ whan a man is meuyd to do synne ayenst the lawe of god/ Al though his reson consente not to do synne in dede Yet seyn some doctours & men that suche delite that dwellith longe is ful perylous/ al be it neuer so lyte/ And also a man shoold sorowe namely for al that euer he hath desired ayen the lawe of god with parfight consentyng to the dede Wherfore I saye that many men repente hem neuer of suche

thoughtes & delytes & neuer shriue hem of it but only of the
lest of grete synnes outwardy / Wherfore I saye that suche vile
fedy dedes & wicked thoughtes ben subtill begilers of hem
that shal be dampned / More ouer man ought to sorowe for
his wicked wordes & for his wicked dedes / For certes repen
taunce of a singuler synne and not repentyng of alle his
other synnys / or elles repentyng hym of al his other synnes
and not of a synguler synne may not auayle / For certes
godd almighty is alle goody And therfore he forgeueth alle
or elles right nought / And therfore saith saint Austyn / I
wote certeinly þ godd is enemy to euery synnar / And how
euery he that obserueth one synne / shal he haue forgeuenes of
the remenaunt of his other synnys / nay / And ferther ouer
contricion sholde be wonder sorouful & augurysshous / And
therfore preyeth hym godd plainly his mercy / And therfore
When my soule Was augurysshous Within me I hadd remem
braunce of godd that my prayer might come to hym / Fur
therouer contricion muste be continuel and that men haue
stedfast purpose to shryue hem & for to amende hem of her lif
For sothly [illegible]ple contricion lasteth / may may haue hope of
forgeuenes / And of this cometh hate of synne that destroy
ieth synne bothe in hym self and eke in other folke at his
power / For Whiche Dauid saith / Ye that louen godd / hate
Wickednes / + For trusteth Wel to loue godd is for to loue
that he loueth and hate that he hateth + The last thinge
that a man shal vnderstond in contricion is this Wherof
auayleth contricion / I say somtyme þ contricion deliuereth
a man fro synne / of Whiche dauid saith / I saye qd dauid / I
purpose fermli to shriue me & thou lord hast releced my synne

And right so as contricion auayleth not Without sadᵉ purpose of shrifte and satisfaction/right so confession ne satisfaction auayle not Without contricion. For muche contricion destroyeth the prison of helle/and maketh Weke and feble the strength of the deuyll/and restoryeth the yefte of the holy goost and of alle vertuys and interclen; seth the soule of synne & deliuereth the soule fro the peyne of helle and fro the company of the deuyll/And fro ser; uage of synne/and restorith to alle goodes spirituel in to the company and cōmunyon of holy chirche/And ferther; ouer hit maketh hym that Was Whylom sone of yre/to be the sone of grace/ And alle these thynges he putteth to holy Wryt/ And therfore he that Wyl sette his entent to thyse thinges he Were ful Wyse/ For therme he sholdᵉ not in al his lyf haue corage to synne/ But therme his bodᵉ and alle his herte he sholdᵉ conformᵉ to the seruyse of Jhesu Crist/ And therfore do hym homage for artes our Swete lordᵉ Jhesu Crist hath spardᵉ vs so benygnly in our folyes that yf he ne hadᵉ pyte on mans soule sory songe myght We alle synge/.

¶ Explicit prima pars penitencie.

Incipit secunda pars.

The secondᵉ part of penitence is confession/and that is signe of contricion/Now shal ye vnderstande What is confession/and Whether hit ought nedes to be or none/ And Whiche thinges be couenable to sery confession/ First shalt thou vnderstande that confession is sery shewyng of synne to the preest/ this is to saye sery/ For he must confesse hym of alle the condicions that be longyng to his.

ſynne as ſerf:zth as he can/ all muſt be ſaidy and nothing
excuſedy ne hidy ne forwrappidy and not auaunte hym of
his goody werkis / And ferthrouer it is neceſſarye to
vnderſtande whens that ſynnys ſpryngey / And how they
encreey / And ther bey ſpryngyng of ſynnys as ſeyth
ſeynt Poule in this wyſe / That right as by a man ſynne
entryd firſt in to this worlde / and thurgh that ſynne
deyde / Right ſo deth entryd in to alle men that ſynnedey
And this man was adam by whom that ſynne entryd
in to this worldy / whan he brak the comandement of gody
And therfore he that firſt was ſo myghty that he ſholdy
not haue deydy / becam ſuche one that he muſte nedes deye
whether he woldy or no and al his progenye that is in
this worldy that in that maner ſynne deyey / Loke that
in the ſtate of Jnnocence whan Adam and Eue were na
kedy in paradyſe and no ſhame hady of her nakydnes.
holde that the ſerpent that was moſt wyly of al other beſtes
that gody hady made ſaydy to the womany / comandedy gody
to you ye ſh[illegible] not ete of euery tre in paradyſe / The wo
many anſwerdy of the fruyt ſaydy ſhe of the trees in para
dyſe we fedey vs / But ſothly of the fruyt of the tree that
is in the mydel of paradyſe / gody forbady vs for to etey
ne to touche it leſt peraventure we ſhal deye / The ſerpent
ſaidy to the womany / nay / nay / ye ſhal not deye of deth
For ſoth gody wote that what day that ye ete therof your
eyey ſhal opey andy ye ſhal be as goddes knowyng
goody andy harmy / The womany ſawe that the tre was
goody to fedyng andy fair to the eye andy delectable to the
ſight / She took of the fruyt of the tree andy ete of hit.

And yaf of hit to her husbonde / and he eet / And anon
the eyen of hem bothe opende / And whan they knewe that
they were nakyd / they sowden of a fyg tre leuys in maner
of hrechis to hiden her membris / Here may ye see that dedely
synne hath first suggestion of the fende / As shewith here
by the adder / And afterward the delyte of the flesh as
shewith here by Eue / And after by consentyng of reson
as shewith by Adam / For trust wel though so were the
fende tempted one that is to saye the flesh / And the flesh
had delyte in the beaute of the fruyt defendid / Yet certes
til that reson that is to saye Adam consentid to the etyng
of the fruyt / he stode high in the state of Jmocence Of that
Adam toke we that synne of oryginal / For of hym flesshly
descended hey we alle and engendrid of vile and corupt
mater / And whan the soule is put in our body right anon
is contract oriqynal synne / And that was only peyne of
concupiscence / Whiche is afterward both peyne and synne
And therfore be we alle bozy sones of wrath & of damp;
nacion perdurable yf ne were baptesme that we receyue /.
Whyche kenymeth vs the culpe / but forsothe the peynes dwelle
with vs as the temptacion / Whyche peyne highte concu;
piscence / And this concupiscence whan it is wrongfully
disposed ez ordeyned in may / hit maketh him coueyte coue
tyse of flesh and flesshly synne by sight of his eyen as to
erthely thinges / And eke couetyse of highnes by pryde of
herte / Nolw as for to spekke of the first couetyse that is con;
cupiscence after the lawde of our membres that were lawfully
made and by ryghtful Jugement of god / J say for as
muche as a man is not obeyssaunt to god that is his lordy

Therfore is his herte to hym disobeyssant / thurgh con-
cupiscence / hit is Impossible but he be tempted som tyme
and moued in his flesh to synne / And thys thyng
may not sayle as longe as he lyueth / hit may wel wexe
feble and sayle by vertu of baptesme / And by the grace
of god thurgh penytence / But fully shal it neuer quenche
That he ne shal somtyme be meuyd in hym self / but yf
he were al refreyned by sykenes or by malice of sorcerye
or colde drynkes / + For what saith seynt Poule / The
flesh coueyteth ayenst the spirytes / And the spiryt ayenst
the flesh they ben so contrary / And so stryuen that may
may not do alway as he wolde / The same seynt Paule
after his grete penaunce in water and in londe by nyght
and by day by grete paryl and in grete peyne in londe in
grete famyn and thryst in colde and ones stoned al-
most to the deth / Yet sayde he alas I caytyf may / Who
shal delyuere me fro the prysen of my caytyf body / And
Saint Jherome sayde / Whan he longe tyme had dwelled
in desert / Where as he had no companye but bestes where
as he had no mete but herbes and water to his drynk
ne no bed but the naked erthe / + For whyche is flesh
was blak as an Ethyope for hete and destroyed for
colde / Yet saidy he the bremynge of lechery boyllede in al
his body / Wherfore I wote wel sikerly that they be dis-
ceyued that say that they be not tempted in her sede
springyng / As wel may the chorle be saued as the lord
The same deth that the chorle taketh the lord taketh / +
Wherfore I rede do ryght so by thy chorle / as thou wol-
dest thy lord did wyth the yf thou were in his plight.

Euery ſymneſul mā is chorle to ſymne / J rede the certes thou
lordy that thou reule the in ſuche wyſe that thy chorles rather
loue the themne hate the / J wote wel ther is degre aboue degre
as reſon is & ſtille is that men do her deuoyr there as it is
due / But certes extorcions and deſpites of your vnder=
lynges is dampnable And furthermore vnderſtonde wel
that conquerours or tyraunts makey wel ofte thrallis of
hem that bey borp of as ryall blood as they that hem con=
queryn / This name of thraldom was nauer knowen erſt
tul that Noe ſaidy / his ſone Canaan ſholdy be thral to his
brethern for his ſymne / What ſaye we themne of them that
pylle and do extorcions to holy chirche / Certes the ſwerdy
that men yeuyn firſt to a knyght whan he is newe dubbyd
ſignefyeth that he ſholdy defende holy chirche and not robbe
hem / And who ſo doth is a traytour to Criſt as ſayth
ſeynt Auſtyn / Tho bey the deuyllis wolues that ſtrangely
the ſheep of Jheſu Criſt and doy worſe than wolues / For
ſoth whan ỹ wolf hath ful his wombe he ſtynteth to ſtrangle
ſheep / But ſothly the pyllours and deſtroyers of goodes
of holy chirche do not ſo / For they ſtynte nauer to pylle /
Now haue J ſaydy ſyn ſo is that ſyme was firſt cauſe of
thraldom and ſubiection / But certes ſith the tyme of grace
cam / god ordeyneby that ſom folk ſholdy be made more in
high aſtate and high degre / and ſom folk more lowe And
that euerich ſholdy be ſeruyd in his aſtate and his degre.
And therfore in ſom contrees there as they bey thrallis.
When they haue tornedy hem to the feyth / they make her
thrallis fre out of thraldom / And therfore certes the lordy
oweth to his may / that the may oweth to the lordy / The

Pope clepeth hym self seruant of seruauntes of gody/But
for as muche as the state of holy chirche might not be kept
in reste ne in pes in erthe/but yf gody hady ordeyneby that
sony mey haue heyer degre/and sony mey lolber/Therfore was
souereynte ordeyneby to kepe andy maintene andy defende her
vnderlyngis or her subiettes in reson as ferforth as it lieth
in her polber/andy not to destroye hem ne confounde/Wher-
fore I say thilke lordes hey Wolues that deuouren the
possessions or the catel of other folk Wrongfully Without
mercy or mesure/They shul be releuyby by the same mesure
that they haue mesureby to poure folk for the mercy of Jhesu
Crist but they it amende/Now shul ye vnderstande in What
maner synne Weyith andy encresith in may/The first thing
is that norisshyngy of synne of Whiche I spak bifore that is
concupiscence/Andy after that cometh suggestion of the de-
uyl/that is to saye the deuyllis telowe/With Whiche he blo-
With in may the fyre of concupiscence/Andy after that a
may lethinketh hym Whether he Wol do or no that thing to
Whiche he is temptedy/Andy than yf that a may Wyth-
stont andy Weyue the first tysyngy of his flesh andy of the
fende/than it is no synne/andy yf so be he do not than feleth
he anone a flame of delite/Andy than it is goody to beWaar
andy to kepe hym Wel or ellis he Wol falle anoy in to consen
tyngy of synne/Andy than Wil he do hit yf he may haue tyme
andy space/Andy of this mater saith Moyses by the deuyl
in this maner/The fende saith I Wil chace & pursiewe the
mā by Wicked suggestion/andy I Wil hente him by meuyng
or stering of synne/andy I Wil departe my pryse or my pray
by deliberacion/andy my lust shal be accomplisshedy in delyte.

I wyl dealbe myn swerdy in consentynge / For certes right as a swerdy departeth one in two precys / right so consentinge departeth godz from may / Andy therme wil I sle hym with my honde in deth of syme / Thus saith the fende / For certes therme is a may al dede in soule / Andy thus is syme com; plysshidy by temptacion / by delyte andy by consentynge / + Andy therme syme is cleped a meruayll / For soth syme is in two maners / eyther it is venial or dedely synne Sothly whan a may loueth ony creature more than Jhesu Crist our creatour therme is hit dedely synne / Andy venyal syme yf a may loue Jhesu Crist lesse than hym ought / Forsothe the dede of this venyal syme is ful perilous for hit amenusith the loue that men sholdy haue to godz more & more / Andy therfore yf a may charge more hym self with many suche venyal symmes / Certes but yf so be that he discharge hem by shryfte / they may wel lightly amenuse in hym al the loue that he hath to Jhesu Crist Andy in this wyse stryppeth ve; inyal syme in to dedely syme / For certes the more that a may chargith his soule with venyal synnys the more is he inclinedy to dedely synne / Andy therfore leet vs not be ne; cligent in dischargynge vs of venyal synne + For the pro; uerbe saith many smale makyth a greet / . Andy herkene thys ensample / a greete walde of the see comyth somtyme with so greet a violence that it drenschith the ship Andy the same harme do somtyme the smale dropes of water / that entre thurgh a lityl creuys in the thurwok andy in the bottom of the shipp yf men be so negligent that they discharge hem not by tyme / Andy therfore al though ther be difference betwene thyse two causes of drenchynge / yet algates the

ship is deynt / Right so fareth it somtyme of dedly synne
& of anoyous venyal synnys Whan they multeplye in may
so greetly that the Worldly thynges that he loueth thurgh
Whiche he synneth venyally is as greete in his herte as the
loue of god or more / And therfore the loue of euery thinge
that is not reset ne don principally for goddes sake / alle
though a may loueth lasse than god / yet is it venyal synne
And dedly synne is Whan the loue of ony thing Weyeth
in the herte of may as muche as the loue of god or more.
Dedly synne as saith saint Austyn is Whan a may tor-
neth his herte from god Whyche that is verray soueravn
lounte that may not be chaunged / And yeueth his herte
to a thyng that may chaunge and flytte / And certes
that is euery thing saue god of heuen / Forsoth yf that a
may yeue his loue Whiche he oweth to god With alle his
herte Vnto a Creature certes so muche of loue as he yeueth
to suche a Creature / so muche bereueth he fro god / And
therfore doth he synne For he that is dettour to god ne yel-
deth not al his dette to god that is to saye al the loue of
his herte / Now sith a may vnderstondeth generally Whiche
is venyal synne / than is it couenable to telle specyally of
synnes Whiche that many a may peraventure demeth hem
not synnys and shryueth hem not of the same synnes.
And yet nathles they be synnes. And sothly as cler
this Wryten this is to saye that euery tyme that a may
eteth or drynketh more than suffyseth to sustenaunce of
his body certayn he doth synne / . Eke Whan he herke-
neth not the compleynt of the poure men / . Eke Whan
he speketh more than hyt nedeth it is synne . /

Eke whan he is in helth of body and wil not faste whan other men faste without cause resonable / Eke whan he slepeth more than needeth / or whan he cometh by that occheson to late to chirche or to other werkys of charyte / Eke whan he vseth his wyf without entent of engendrure to the honour of god or for thentent to yelde his wyf the dette of his body / eke whan he wil not visite the syke or the prysoners whan he may / eke yf he loue wyf or chylde or ony other wordly thyng more than reson requyreth / eke yf he flatere or blaundyse more than hym ought for ony necessite Eke yf he amenuse or withdraw the almes of the poure / eke yf he apparayle his mete more delicyously than nede is or ete it to hastely by lycherousnes Eke yf he talke vanytees in the chirche or at goddes seruyse or that he be a talker of ydle wordes of folye or of vilonye / For he shal yeue accountes of hit at the day of dome / eke whan he behoteth or assureth to do thinges that he may not performe / eke whan by lyghtnes of folye mysseyeth or scornyth his neyghbour / Eke whan he hath ony wickyd suspecion of thing there be woot of hit no sothfastnes / These thinges and moo with outen nombre be synnes as saith saint Austyn / Wolde shal ye vnderstonde that al be hit so that none erthely man may eschewe alle venyal synnes / yet may he refreyne hym by the bremyng loue that he hath to our lord Jhesu Crist / And by prayers and confession and other good werkes so that it shal but lityl greue / For as saith saint Austyn / yf a man loue god in suche maner that al that euer he doth is in the loue of god or for the loue of god / lolke how mykyl that a drope of water that fallith in a furneys ful of fyre

anoyeth or greueth so mykel anoieth a venyal synne vnto a man that is parfaghe in the loue of Jhesu Crist/ Mey may also refreyne venyal synne by the receyuyng of the precyous body of Jhesu Crist/ by receyuyng eke of holy Water/ by almes dede/ by general confession of confiteor at masse & at pryme and complyne/ and by blissyng of bisshopps and of preestis and by other goody werkis.

De septē peccatis mortalibz. Incipit de superbia.

NOw it is behouely thing to telly of whiche hey dedely synnes/ that is to saye capytif of synnes/ Alle they renne in to vobis but in diuerse maner/ Nolle he they cleped capitals for as muche as they be chief & springing of alle other synnys/ Of the rote of thyse. vij. synnys is pryde the general rote of alle harmis for of this rote springey certain braunchis as Ire/ enuye/ accidye or slouthe/ auarice or couetyse to comyn vnderstanding/ glotonye/ and lecherye/ And euerich of thise synnes hath his braunchis and his twigges as shal be declared in her chapitres folowyng/ And though so be that may knowbeth not vtterly the nombre of the twiggis and of the harmys that comey of pryde/ yet wil I shewe a partye of hem as ye shal vnderstande/ Ther is inobedience/ auaunt yng/ ypocrysye/ despyte/ arwogancye/ Imprudence/ swellyng of herte/ Insolence/ Elacion/ pertynacye/ veyn glorye/ And many other twiggis that I can not declare/ Inobedient is he that disobeieth for despite to the comandement of god & to his souerens and to his gostly fader/ Auaunteour is he that auaunteth hym of the harme or of the bounte that he hath don Ypocrysye is he that hideth to shewe hym suche as he is. And shewith hym to the pepl to seme suche as he is not.

Dispitous is he that hath disdayn of his neyghbour that is to saye of his euen cristen and hath despyte to doo that hym ought to do/ Arrogaunt is he that thynketh that he hath that lounte in hym that he hath not/or weneth that he sholde haue hit by his desert/ or ellis that he demeth that he be that he is not/ Imprudent is he that for his pryde hath no shame for his synne/ Swellyng of herte is whan a mā reioyseth hym of harm that he hath doo/ Insolent is he that dispyseth in his Jugement alle other folke as to the regarde of his value and of his comyng and of his spekyng and of his beryng/ Elate is he whan he may neyther suffre to haue maister ne felowe/ Impacient is he that wil not be taught ne vndernome of his vices and by strif warrieth ayenst trouthe wetyngly and defendeth his folye/ Contumacy is he that thrugh his Indignacion is ayenst euery auctorite or power of hem that ben his souereyns/ Presumpcion is whan a man taketh an enpryse that hym ought not to do/or ellis he may it not do/ And that is callid Surquydry/ Irreuerence is whan a man doth not honour there as hym ought to do and wayteth to be reuerencyd/ Pertynacy is whan a man defendeth his folye and trusteth to mykyl to his olden witte/ Veyn glorye is for to haue pompe and delyte in temporel highnes & glorifye hym in wordly estates/ Jangelyng is whan a man spekith to mykyl to fory folk and clappyth as a mylle and taketh no kepe what he saith And ther is yet a preue spyce of pryde that wayteth first to be salewyd or he salewe/ al be he lesse worthy than that other is paventure and ellis he wayteth to sytte or to goo aboue hym in the weye or kysse pax or be sensyd

as go to offeryng before his neyghbour and suche a proude
desire to be magnified and honoured before the peple / Of
hem ther ben two maners of pryde that one of hem is within the
herte of man / And that other is without / Of whiche
forsaid thinges and moo than I haue said appertayney to
the pryde that is within the herte of man / And ther be also
other spices of pride that be without en. But natheles one of
thyse spices of pride is signe of that other / Right as the gay
stake of tauernes is signe of the wyn that is in the seler / and
this is in many thinges as in speche in contenance in outra
geousnes / of array of clothyng Crist wold not so sone haue
noted and spoken of the clothing of that riche man in the
gospel but yf hit had ben synne / For as saith seynt Gie /
gone / Precyous clothyng is aul pable for the derthe of hit
and for his strangenes / for his disguysynges and for
the superfluyte / or for the inordynate scantues / As to the
first syme that is in superfluyte of clothing / Whiche that
maketh it so dere to harm of the peple that only the cost of
the enbrouding / the disgysing endentyng / or barrying /
oundyng / palyng and semblable wyse of clothing in
vanyte / Ther is also costlew furryng in golbnes / And
also mykyl pounsyng of chesell to make hoolis so mykyl
daggyng of sherys with the superfluyte in lenghte of the
forsayd golbnys traylyng in the dongy and in the myre
on hors and eke on foot as wel of man as of woman /
that al that traylyng is verily as in effect wastedy / consu
medy / threedbare & roten with dongy rather than it is yeuen
to the poure / to grete domage of the forsaid poure folk and
that in sondry wyse / this is to sayn the more that cloth

is Wastyd the more muste it coste for the scarsenes/And
furtherouer yef they Wolde yeue suche pounsid and draggis
clothis to the poure folk / it is not conuenyent to Were for
her estate ne sufficyent to her necessite / Oy that other syde
for to spekē of the disordinat scantnes of clothyng as ben
these cuttedy sloppis or hanselynes that thurgh her shortnes
couer not the shamefull membris of a may to Wickedy en;
tent/Allas some of hem shewen in the shap and the hoos
of the horrible sWollen membris that semen like to the ma;
ladye of hirma in the Wrappyng of her hosyn and eke the
buttokkis of hem behynde that savey as it Were the hynder
part as a she ape in the ful of ỹ mone/And more ouer the
Wreschidy sWellyng membris that they shewe in disgisingy
in departyng of her hosyn Whit and rede semeth that half
the preuy membris Were fleyn/And so by that they depar;
tey her hosen in other colours as is Whit & black / or Whyt
and blewe/or black and reedy and so forth/Thay semeth
it as by Varyance of colour that half the part of his preuy
membris ben corupt by the fyre of seynt Antonye / or by
Canker / or by other suche myschaunces / yet of the hyndar
part of her buttokis it is Wel horrible for to see / For certes
in that partye of her body/ther as they purgen her stynkyng
ordure / that foule party shewe they proudly to the pple in
despit of honeste / Whiche honeste that Jhesu Crist and his
frendes obseruedy to shewe in his lyf / Nold as to outera;
geous aray of Woman/ gody Wote though the Visage of hem
seme ful chast and debonair/yet notifyen they in their araye
of a tyre / licherousnes and pryde / I saye not that honeste
in clothyng of man & Woman is vncouenable/but certes

the superfluyte or disordinat scharcete of clothinge is repro-
ble/ Also ỳ syme of ornement or in apparaille as in thinges
that appertayne to ridynge/ as in many deliciat horses ỹ be hol
dry for delite be cause they be so fair fat & costlewe/ And also
many a vicyous knaue maintenyd be cause of hem/ And
in curyous harneys as in sadels/ croperes/ peytrellis/ & bridels
couerd with precious cloth & riche barres & plates of gold &
siluer For whiche god saith by Zacharie the prophete/ I wil
confounde ỹ riders on suche horsis/ These folk takey litel re-
gard of ridinge of goddes sone & his harneys when he rood
vpon an asse & had non other harneys but ỹ clothis of his p-
piue disciplis/ Ne we rede not ỹ he rode euer on ony other beste.
I speke thus the of superfluyte/ not for the honeste when
reson it requireth/ And ferthermore certes pryde is gretly
notified in holdynge of grete meyne when they be of litel
prouffit/ and namely when the meyne is felenous & dama-
geous to the pple by hardynes of her lordshipe or by vertu of
office/ For certes such lordis sellyn her lordshipps to ỹ deuil
of helle/ when they susteyne ỹ wickednes of her meyne/ or els
when these folk of lowe degre as they ỹ holdey hostelryes sul
teyne theefte by their hostelers & that is in many maners of
disceytes/ suche maner of folk ben the flyes ỹ folowen ỹ hony
Or els the houndes that folowen ỹ auere which forsaidy folk
stragley spirituelly her lordshipe For which thus saith dauid
Wickednes mot come on the lordshipps/ & god agyue that they
mowe descende doun in to helle/ For in her houses is iniquyte &
shrewdnes & not god of heuyn/ & certes yf ỹ do no mendement
right as god yaf his blessinge to laban be cause of Jacob & to
pharao for ỹ seruyse of ioseph/ right so wil god ieue his malison

to ſuche lordes that ſuſteyne the wickednes of her ſeruauntis
But the comyn pryde of the table appereth eke ful ofte For
certes riche men be cleped to feſtis and poure folk be put
abey and rebuked / And ther is exceſſe of diuerce metes
and deynkes & namely of curyous maner of bakemetis
and of ſemblable waſt ſo that it is abuſion for to thynke
And eke in grete precyouſnes of veſſel and curioſite of
mynyſtralcye by the whiche a man is ſtyred more to the de
lytes of luxurye / yf ſo be that he ſette his herte the leſſe vpon
our lord Jheſu Criſt certeyn it is a ſyme / And certes the
delycate metis and the delyte myght be ſo greet in the eaas
that men might the lightlyer falle by hem in to dedly ſyme
The ſpyces that ſourden of pryde / ſothly is whan they ſourden
of malice ymagined and auiſed and forn caſt or elis of
vſage / been dedly ſymys it is no doubte / And whan they
ſourden by freelte vnauyſed ſodeinly / and ſodenly with-
drawe agayn / al be they greuous ſymys / I geſſe & ſuppoſe
they be not dedly / Now myght men axe wherof that pryde
ſourdeth and ſpryngeth / And I ſaye that ſomtyme it
ſpryngeth of goodes of nature / And ſomtyme of the goo-
des of fortune / and ſom tyme of the goodes of grace / Certes
the goodes of nature ſtonden in the goodes of body or of ſoule
Certes the goodes of the body ben hele of body / ſtrenghte / de-
lyuernes / beaute / gentrye and fraunchiſes / The goodis of
nature of the ſoule ben / good witte with ſharp vnderſton-
dyng / ſubtil engyn / vertu naturel / good memorye / Goodes
of fortune ben riches / high degrees of lordſhippis & prey-
ſyng of the peple / Goodes of grace ben ſcience / power to ſuf-
fre ſpirytuel trauayll / benignytees / vertuous contemplacon

wythstandyng of temptacion and semblable thynges.
Of whiche forsaid goodes certes it is a grete folye a man
to pryden hym in ony of hem alle / Now as for to speke of
goodes of nature god wote that som tyme we haue them
in nature as muche to our damage as to our prouffyt /.
As for to speke of hele of body certes it passith ful lightly
And eke it is ful of the thencheson of the sikenes of the soule
For god wote the flesh is a ful grete enemy to the soule.
And therfore the more that a body is hool / the more be we in
peryl to falle / Eke for to pryde hym in his strenghte of body
it is a grete folye / For certes the flesh coueyteth ayenst the
spiryte / And euer the more stronger the flesh is / the soryer
may the soule be / And ouer al this strength of the body
and wordly hardynes causeth ful ofte many mey to peryssle
and myschance. Eke for to pryde hym of his genterye / it is
ful grete folye. For ofte tyme the genterye of the body begyn
neth of the gentrye of the soule / And eke we be alle of one
fader & of one moder / And alle we hey of one nature wotyn
and corupt bothe Riche and poure / For sothe a maner gen /
trye is for to preyse that apparaylleth mannes corage with
vertues or moralytees and makith hym a Cristen child.
For trusteth wel that what man that syme hath ouer mais
tryd is hery chorle to syme / Now hey ther thre general
thynges of gentilnes as eschewyng of vicys or rybaudrye
And seruage of syme in word and werk in contenance
And vsyng vertu as courtesye / clennesse and to be liberal
that is to saye large by mesure. For that that passith mesure
is folye and syme / Another is that he remembre hym of
the bounte that he of other folk hath resseyuyd / Another

And is to be kenygne ouer his subgette/ Wherfore as saith Seneke/ Ther is nothyng more conenable to may of high estate that debonayrte/ And these flyes that men clepen Bees Whan they make her kynge/ they chesen one that hath noy pykke Wherwith he may stynge/ Another is a may to haue a noble herte and a diligent tatteyne to hye vertuos thynges/ Certes also Who that pryeth in the goodis of fortune he is ful lyke a grete fole/ For somtyme a may is a ful grete may by the moroll/ that is a Wreche as a capytf or it be nyght/ And somtyme delytes of may ben cause of greuous maladye thorugh Whiche he deyeth/ Certes the commendacion of the peple is somtyme ful fals and ful brotyl for to truste This day they preyse/ to moroll they blame/ godd Woot/ Eke desire to haue comendacion of the peple hath cau/ sed deth to many a may Moll certes a may to pryde hym in the goodis of grace is eke an outrageous folye for the yeftes of grace that sholde haue tornedy hym to goodnes and to medecyne tornyth to tenym and to confusion/ as saith seynt Gregoze/ Moll sith that so is that ye haue vnderstonde What is pryde and Whiche ben the spicis of hit/ and holl memys pryde sourdeth and spryngith/ Moll shal ye vnderande Whiche is the remedye agaynst pryde/ And that is humylyte or meknes/ That is a vertu thurgh Whiche man hath ben knowleche of hym self and holdeth of hym self no deynte ne no pryce as in regardy of his desertes conside/ ryng euer his freelte/ Moll ben ther thre maners of humylyte/ as humylyte in herte/ and another in the mouth/ and ȳ thirde in Werkis/ The humylite in herte is in foure maners that is Whan a mā holdeth hym self as nought Werth bifore

good of heuyn / Another is whan he despiseth none other man
The thirde is / that he reckith not though men holde hym
nought / The fourthe is whan he is not sory of his humilia
cion / Also the humyliacion of mouth is in foure thinges.
In attempraat speche / And whan he knowith with his
owen mouth that he is suche as he thinketh that he is in his
herte / Another whan he preiseth the debonairte of another mā
And also nothyng therof amenusith / Humylite eke in
werkis is in foure maners / The first is whan he put men
before hym / The seconde is to chese the lowest place / The.iij.
is gladly to assente to good counceyl / The.iiij.is gladly
to stonde in obedience of his souereyn or of hym that is hi-
gher in degre / Certes that is a grete werk of humylite.

¶ Sequitur de Inuidia.

After pryde wil I speke of the foule synne of enuye.
Whiche that is as by the worde of the philosophre sorow
of other mennys prouffit / And after the word of seynt
Austyn it is sorow of other mens wele and Joye of other
mennys harm / This foule synne is platly ayenst the holy
goost / Al be it so that euery synne is ayenst the holy goste.
Yet for as muche as bounte appertayneth to the holy goste
properly / And enuye cometh properly of malice / Therfore
it is properly ayenst the bounte of the holy goste / Mold hath
malyce two spices that is to saye hardynes of herte and
wickednes / or ellis the flesh of man is so blynde that he
consyderyth not that he is in synne / Whyche is the har-
dynes of the deuyl / That other spyce of enuye is whan a
man warrith ayenst trouthe whan that he woot that it is
trouth / And eke whan that he warrith the grace that god

hath yeue to his neyghbour / And̄ al this by enuye / certes thay is enuye the werst syme that is / For sothly alle other symmys be som tyme ayenst one specyal vertu / But certes enuye is ayenst alle maner vertues and̄ alle goodnes / for it is sory of al bounte of his neyghbours / And̄ in this maner it is dyuerce from al symmys / For vmmethe is ther ony syme that it ne hath som delyte in hym self saue only enuye that euer hath in hym self angwysh and̄ sorwe / The spices of enuye bey thyse / Ther is first sorwe of other mens goodnes / And̄ of her prosperyte ought to be kyndely mater of Joye / Thame is enuye a syme ayenst kynde / The secondy spice of enuye is ioye of other mens harme / Of this secondy spice cometh bakbytyng or detraction that hath two spicis as thus / Som men preyse her neyghbour by wicked entent For he maketh alway a wicked knotte atte last ende alway he maketh a but that is signe of more blame thay worth is al the preysing / The secondy spice is that a may be goody and̄ doo and̄ saye a thing to goody entent / The bacbitar wil borne al the goodnes vp so downe to his shrewdy entent The thirde is to auenuse the bounte of his neyghbour / The fourth spice of bacbityng is this that yf men speke goodnes of a may / the bacbitar wil say / persay yet is suche a mā better thay he / in dispreysing of hym that men preyse / The fyfthe is to consente gladly to herkne the harm that men spekey of other folk / this syme is ful grete and̄ ay encre; sith after the wicked entent of the bacbiter / After bacbytyng comyth grucchyng or murmurance / And̄ somtyme it springeth of Impacience ayenst god & somtyme ayenst may / Ayenst god is whay a may grucchyth agaynst the

payne of helle / or ayenst pouerte or losse of catel or ayenst
rayn or tempest / or els grucchith that shrewis haue prospe;
rite / or elles that goody men haue aduersite / And alle these
thinges sholde men suffre paciently / For they comyn by the
rightful Jugement and ordynance of gode / Some tyme es
mith grucchyng of auarice as Judas grucched ayenst Mag
daleyn Whan she anoynted the hede of our lorde Jhesu Crist
With her precyous oynement / This maner of murmur is
such as Whan men grucchen of goodnes / of that men hem self
done / or that other folk doon of her olben catel / Somtyme es
mith murmur of pride as Whan Symon the pharise grucchid
ayenst Magdaleyn Whan she approchid to Jhesu Crist / And
Wepte at his feet for her synnys / And somtyme it sourdeth
of enuye Whan men discouerin a mans harm that Was prue
or berith hym on honde thing that is fals / Murmur is eke
ofte among seruantes Whan her souereyns bidden hem do les
full thingis / And for as muche as they dar not openly With;
saye the comandement of her maister / yet Wil they saye harme
& grucche & murmure priuely for very dispite / Whiche Wordes
men clepe the deuylles pater noster / though so be the deuyl had
neuer pater noster / but that folk yeue suche a name / somtyme
it cometh of yre or of prive hate ꝑ norisseth rancour in herte
as after I shal declare Thenne cometh eke bitternes of herte
Thurgh Whiche bitternes euery goody dede of his neyghbour
semyth to hym bitter & vnsauory / Than cometh discorde that
vnbindeth al maner of frendship / Thenne cometh scornyng
of his neighbour al do he neuer so Wel / thenne cometh accusing
as Whan men seken occasion to amoye his neighbour / Whiche
that is like the craft of ꝑ deuil ꝑ Wayteth both night & day to

accuſeth vs alle/ Thys me cometh malignyte thurgh whiche
a may noyeth his neyghbour pryuely yf he may/ And yf
he nought may algate his wicked wil ſhal not wante
as for to breme his hous pryuely or empoyſen hym or ſle
his beſtis and ſemblable thingis/ Now wil I ſpeke of the
remedy of this foule ſyme of enuye/ The firſt is the loue
of god principally and louyng of hym ſelf and of his
neyghbour/ For ſothly that one may not be without that
other/ And criſt wil in the name of thy neyghbour that
thou ſhalt vnderſtande thy broder/ For certes alle we haue
one fader fleſhly & one moder that is to ſaye Adam and
Eue/ And eke one fader ſpirytuel that is to ſaye god of
heuen/ Thy neyghbour art thou holde for to loue and wille
hym al goodnes/ And therfor ſaith god/ loue thy neygh
bour as thy ſelf that is to ſaye to lyf and to ſoule and
ſaluacion/ And more ouer thou ſhalt loue hym in worde &
benigne chere and monyſſhyng and chaſtiſyng in a loys
to comforte hym & praye for hym with al thy herte/ And
in dede thou ſhalt loue hym in ſuche wyſe that thou ſhalt do
to hym in charyte as thou woldeſt were done to thyn olden
ſone/ And therfore thou ſhal do to hym no domage in wic
kedy word ne harm in his body ne in his catel ne in his
ſoule by entyſyng of wickedy enſample/ Thou ſhalt not de;
ſire his wyf ne none of his thingis/ Vnderſtonde eke that
in the name of thy neyghbour is comprehendid his enemy
Certes a may ſhal loue his enemy for the comandement of
god/ And ſothly thy frende ſhal thou loue in god/ I ſay
thyn enemye ſhal thou loue for gods ſake by his comande;
ment/ For it were reſon a may ſholde hate his enemy/ For

soth god wol not receyue vs to his loue that ley his ene-
myes / Ayenst thre maner wronges that his enemy doth to
hym he shal do thre thingis as thus / ayenst hate & vnkyndnesse
of herte he shal loue hym in herte / ayenst chydyng and vile
and wordes he shal praye for his enemye / ayenst the wickednes
dede of his enemye he shal do hym bounte. For Crist saith
louyth your enemyes and praieth for hem that spekith you
harm and eke for hem that you chasen and pursuen and
do bounte to hem that you haten / Lo thus comaundeth vs
our lord Jhesu Crist to do to our enemyes For soth nature
deyueth vs to loue our frendes / And parfey our enemyes
haue more nede to loue than our frendes / And they that
more nede haue / Certes to hem shal we do goodnes / and
certes in that dede haue remembraunce of the loue of Jhesu
Crist that deyde for his enemyes / And for as muche as
that loue is the more greuous to perfourme / so muche is
more greet the merite / And therfore the louyng of our
enemy hath confounded the kenym of the deuyl / For right
as the deuyl is scomfyted by humylyte / Right so is he
wounded to the deth by the loue of our enemye / Certis
than is loue medicyn that chaceth out the kenym of en-
uye fro mannys herte.

Sequitur de Ira.

After enuye wol I declare of the synne of Ire Forsoth
he that hath enuye vpon his neyghbour / anon comyn-
ly wyl synde hym mater of wratthe in word or in dede / ayenst
hym to whom he hath enuye for soothly he that is proud or
enuyous is lightly wroth / This synne of Ire after dis-
crivyng of seynt Austyn is wicked wille to be auengid

by worde or by dede / Ire after the philosopher is the feruent bloody of may y quyckendy in his herte / thurgh whiche he wille harme to hym that he hateth / For certes the herte of may by enchafynge and meuynge of his bloody weyeth so troubledy that he is out of al Jugement of resons / But ye shul vnderstande that Ire is in two maners / Ony of hem is goody and that other is wickedy / The goody Ire is by Jelousye of goodnes thorugh the whiche a may is wroth with wickednes and agaynst wickednes / And therfore saith the wyseman that Ire is better than playe / This Ire is with debonayrte and it is wrath without bitternes. not wroth agaynst the may / but wroth with the myssede of the may as saith the prophet / Irascimini et nolite peccare Now vnderstonde that wicked Ire is in two maners that is to saye sodeyn Ire or hasty Ire without auisement and consentynge of his reson / The meninge and the sense of this / is that reson of a may ne consenteth not to that sodeyn Ire / and than is it venyal / Another Ire is that is ful wicked that cometh of felonye of herte auysedy and cast byfore with wickedy wyl to do vengeance / and therto his reson consentith and sothly this is dedely synne / This Ire is so displaysaunt to gody that it troublyeth his hous and chacyeth the holy goste out of mannys soule and put in hym the seruage of the deuyl and benymeth the may fro gody that is his rightful lordy / This Ire is a ful gret plesaunce to the deuyl for it is the deuilis furneys that he enchaufith with the fyre of helle / For certes as fyre is more myghty to destroye erthly thingis than another element / Right so ire is myghty to destroye al spirituel thingis

Loke how that fyre of smale gledis that be almoste dede vn-
der asshes wil quyckely ayen wexe whan they be touchid with hem
self/Right so ire wil euer more quyckely agayn whan it is
touchid with pryde that is couerid in mannys herte/ For
certes fyre may not come out of nothing but yf hit were
first in the same thing naturelly as fyre is drawen out of
flyntis with steel/Right so is pryde a mater of ire/right
as rancour is norisshyr and kepar therof/Ther is a maner
tre as saith seynt Isodore/ That whan men make fyre of
that tre and couer the colis of hit with asshes/ Sothly the
fyre therof wol laste al a yere or more/And right so fareth
it by rancour/Whan he is ones conseyned in the hertes of
sum men/Certis it wil last peraventure from one ester day
tyl an other or more/ But certes that man is ful ferre
from the mercy of god al that whyle/In this forsaid de-
uylles formeys they forgen thre shrewis/Pryde than blow-
eth and encreseth the fyre by chydyng and wickyd wordes
Theme stont enuye and holdeth the yron vpon the hertes
of men/ With a payr of long tonges with longe ran-
cour/ And they stont the fyre of contynuel stryf and
cheest and betith and forgith the vilayns reprouynges.
Certes this cursid fyre anoieth both the man hym self &
eke his neyghbour For sothly almost al the harm that one
man doth to his neyghbour cometh of wrath. For certes
outrageous wrath doth al that euer the deuyl comandeth
hym. For he spareth neyther for Crist ne his swete moder
in his outrageous anger and ire but spekith and sklaun-
dreth his neyghbour/this is a cursid lyf which lyf sholde
be detonayr and spyrytuel that sholde kepe hys sowle.

Certes this Ire or Wraththe byreymeth the goddis due lord-
ship and that is mans soule and the loue of his neygh-
bours / hit stryueth alway eke ayenst trouthe / hit reueth
hym the quyete of his herte and subuertith his sowle / Of
yre comyn thyse stynkyng engendrures / First hate that is
olde Wraththe venemdy / thurgh Whiche a man forsaketh his
olden frende that he hath louyd so longe / And therme co-
myth Werre and euery maner of Wrongy that a man doth
to his neyghbour in body or in Catel / Of this cursid synne
of Ire cometh eke manslaghter / And vnderstandeth Wel
that manslaghter is in dyuerse Wyse / Some maner of
manslaughter is spirytuel / And some bodely / Spirytuel
manslaghter is in sixe thingis / First by hate as saith
seynt John / he that hateth his broder is an homicyde / Man-
slaghter is eke by bacbytyng of Whiche bacbitours saith
Salamon that they haue two swerdis Wyth Whyche they
sle her neyghbours / For sothly as Wicklyd it is to benyme
his goody name as his lyf / homicyde is eke in yeuyng of
Wicklyd counceyl by fraude / or for to yeue counceyl for to
areyse Wrongful customs and talagis of Whiche spekith
Salamon / Lyon woryng and bere hungry bey likenyd
to cruel lordis / in Withholdyng or abreggyng of the hyre
or Wagis of poure folk / For Whiche the Wyseman saith /
Fede ye hym that almoste deyeth for hunger / For sothly
but yf thou fede hym thou slest hym / And al thyse bey
dedely synnys / Bodely manslaughter is Whan thou slest
hym With thy tunge / Another maner is Whan thou com-
dest to sle a man / or ellis yeuyst hym counceyl to sle a man
Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners / That one is by

ſalde / right as a Juſtyce dampneth hym that is culpable to the deth / but lete the Juſtyce beware that he do it right-fully ¶ And that he do it not for delite to ſpylle blood but for kepyng of right Wiſnes / ¶ Another homicyde is don for neceſſyte as Whan a man ſleeth another hys defendaunt and that he ne may other Wyſe eſcape fro his owen deth. ¶ But certayn and he may eſcape Without ſlaughter of his aduerſarye and ſleeth hym he doth ſynne / and he ſhal here penaunce as for dedely ſynne / Eek yf a man by caas or auenture ſhete any arowe or caſt a ſtoon With Which he ſleeth a man it is homicyde / Eke yf a Woman by ner-lygence ouer lyeth her chylde in ſlepyng / it is homicyde and dedely ſynne / Eke Whan a man deſtroyeth concep-cion of a childe or maketh a Woman barayne by drynkes of ſenymous herbis thurgh Whiche ſhe may not conceyue Or ſleeth her chylde by drynkis / or elles putteth certayn materyal thyng in her ſecrete place to ſle her chylde / or elles doth vnkynde ſynne / by Whiche man or Woman ſhe-deth his nature in place ther as a childe may not be con-ceyued / or elles yf a Woman haue conceyued and hurt her ſelf and ſleeth her chylde / yet is it homicyde / What ſaye We eke of Women that murdren her childeren for drede of Worldly ſhame Certes it is eke an horryble homycyde Eke yf a man approche to a Woman by deſyre of lecherye thurgh Whiche the childe is peryſſhed elles ſmyteth a Wo-man Wetyngly by Whyche her chylde is ſlayn / ¶ Alle thyſe ben homycydes and dedely horryble ſynnys / yet comyn of Ire many mo ſynnys as In Word in thought in dede as Wel as he that aretteth vpon god or blaſphemyth god

of whyche he is hym self gilty or dispiseth god and alle his halowis as don thyse cursid hasourdours in diuerse contrees / This cursed synne do they whan they seley in her herte ful wickedly of god and his halowis / Also whan they tretyn vnworthyly the sacrament of the awter / Thilke synne is so grete / that vnnethe may it be releeyd but that the mercy of god passyth his werkis / whyche mercy is grete and benygne / Ther cometh also of Ire a fery anger whan a man is sharply amonesshed in his shryfte to forlete his synne / Than wil he be angry and answere hokirly & angerly to defende or excusyn his synne / by vnstedfastnes of his flesh / or ellis he dyde hit for to holde compeny with his felawis / or ellis he saith / the fende entised hym / or ellis he dyde hit for his yongth / or els his complexion is so corageous that he may not forbere / ellis it is destyne as he saith vnto a certayn age / or ellis he saith it comyth hym of gentilnes of his auncetrys and semblable thingis Alle thyse maner of folk so wrappen hem in her synnys that they wil not delyuer hem self / For sothly no wight that excusith hym wilfully of his synne / may be deliuerd of his synne / til he meekely beknowith his synne / After theme cometh swerynge that is expres ayenst the comaundement of god and this befallyth of anger and of Ire. God saith thou shalt not take the name of thy lord in ydil / Also our lord Jhesu Crist saith by the word of seynt matheu / ne wille ye to swere in alle maner / neyther by heuen for hit is goddis trone / neyther by erthe for it is the benche of his feet / ne by Jherusalem / for it is the Cyte of a grete kynge / ne by thyn hede / for thou ne maist make ay

ȝer Whyte ne blacke/but your oth ſhal be ye/ye/nay/nay.
And what that is more ayȝl/thus ſaith Criſt For criſtes
ſake ſwere ye not ſo ſynfully in diſmembryng of Criſt.
by ſoule/ herte/ bonys/ and body. For ye thinke that the
auȝſtly Jelbis diſmembrith hym not ynowȝh but ye diſmem
bre hym more/ And yf ſo be the lawe compelle you to ſwere
therme vexle you after the lawe of god in your ſwerynȝ
As ſaith ſeynt Jherome the.iiij.chapitre Thou ſhalt kepe
thre condicions Thou ſhalt ſwere in trouth/in dome/ and
in righthelbiſnes This is to ſaye thou ſhalt ſwere ſoth For
euery leſing is ayenſt Criſt/for criſt is very trouthe/ And
thinke wel this that euery grete ſwerer not compellid lawh
fully to ſwere the plaghe of ȝengeance ſhal not parte from
his hous Whiles he vſeth ſuche vnlawful ſwering Thou ſhalt
eke ſwere in dome Wherme thou art compellid by thy domes
man to witneſſe the trouthe/ Eke thou ſhalt not ſwere for
envye/ for fauour/ for mede/ but for righthelbiſnes for declaring
of trouth to the worſhip of god & to helpyng of thyn euen
criſten/ And therfore euery man that taketh godes name
in ydle or falſly ſwerith with his mouth/ or ellis taketh on
hym the name of Criſt to be a callid a Criſten man & liueth
ayenſt criſten liuyng & his teching/ alle they take goddis
name in ydle/ Loke eke What ſaith ſeynt Petir Actuum
quarto/ Ther is none other name vnder heuen yeuen to man
in Whiche they moot be ſauyd/ That is to ſaye but in the
name of Jheſu Criſt/ Take kepe eke hou that precyous na
me of Jheſu Criſt As ſaith ſeynt Poule at philipenſes c̄
In nomine Jheſu c̄/ That in the name of Jheſu euery
kne of heuenly creature or erthely or of helle ſholde bowen.

For hit is so high and so worshipful that the cursid fende in helle sholde tremble for to here it named / Than semeth it that men that swere so horribly his blessid name that they despyse it more boldly than dyde the cursid Jewys that tremeleden whan they herd his name / Nold certes sith that swerynge but it be do al lawfully is so hoolly defended muche werse is for to swere falsely and eke nedeles / What saye we eke of them that delyten them in swerynge and holde it a gentrye or manly dede to swere grete othis / And what of hem that of lery vsage ne cesse not to swere grete othes / All the cause not worth a strawe / Certes this is horryble synne / Sweryng also without auisement is eek synne. But late vs goo nold to that cursid and horrible swerings of adiuracion and conjuracion as don thyse fals enchaunters and nygromanceers in basyns ful of water / or in a bright swerd / in a cercle or in a fyre / or in a sholder boon of a sheep I can not saye but they do cursidly and dampnably ayenst Crist and al the faith of holy chirche / What saye by them that bileuyn in dym naylis as by flight or by noyse of birdis & of beestis or by sorte / by nygromancye / by dremes By chirchyngs of doris by gnawyng of ratis or crakyng of housis and suche maner of wrecchidnes / Certis all this thing is defendid by god and eke holy chirche / for whiche they be cursid til they come to amendement / that on suche fylthe sette their byleue / Charmys for woundis and maladyes of men or of bestis / yf they take ony effect / it may be perauenture that god suffreth it / for men sholde gyue the more feith and reuerence to his name / Nold wil I spekē of lesynges whiche generally is fals signifiacion of word

with entent to disceyue his euen Cristen/ Some lesing ther
is of whiche cometh none auauntage to no wight/ And
some lesing tourneth to the ese and prouffit of a man and to
domage of another man/ Another lesing for to saue his lif
or catel/ Another lesing comyth of delyte/ They wil forge
a long tale and peynte it with al circumstancis therof
alle the grounde is fals/ Some lesing comyth for he wil
susteyne his word/ And some lesing comyth of rechelis-
nes without ony auysement and semblable thingis/ Lete vs
nowe towche the vice of flaterye/ whiche comyth not gladly
but for dede or for couetyse. Flaterye is generally wrong-
ful prayseing/ Flatereres ben the deuillis norices that norisseth
his children with the mylk of losengery/ For soth saith
Salamon that flaterye is worse than detraction. For some
tyme detraction makith ony haunteyn may be the more hum
ble for he dredeth detraction/ But certayn flaterye maketh
a man to enhaunce his herte & his contenaunce/ Flatereres
ben the deuilles enchauntours for they makeyn a man to wenyn
hym self be like/ that he is not like/ They be like Judas that
betraid god/ And thyse flatereres betraye a man to selle
hym to his enemy that is the deuil/ Flatereres ben the deuillis
chapelleyns that syngen euer placebo/ I reclene flaterye in
vices of yre/ For ofte tyme yf a man be wroth with another
Thenne wil he flatere som wight to sustene him in his qua-
rell/ Spekе we nowe of suche cursing as comith out of yrous
hertes/ Malison may be saidy generally euery maner power
of harm/ suche cursyng bereueth a man the regne of god
As saith seynt Paule/ And ofte suche cursyng wrong-
fully retorneth ayen to hym that cursyth/ As a birdy

retorneth agayn to his olden neste/And ouer alle thinge men ought tescheude to curse her childeen and to yeue to the deuyl her engendrure as ferforth as in hem is/ Certis it is a grete peryl and a grete synne/ Lete vs therme speke of chydynge and reprouynge Whyche ben grete Wounds in mannys herte/for certes vnmeth may a man be plainly accorded With hym that he hath openly reuyled/ reprouyd and disclaundrid this is a ful grisly synne/as Crist saith in the gospel/And take ye kepe nowe that he that reprouith his neyghbour by som harme or by some peyne that he hath in his body/ as mesil/ croked harlote/ or by sum signe that he doth/Nowe yf he reprouyth hym by harm of peyne/ therme retorneth the repref to Jhesu Crist/ For peyne is sent by the ryghtwys sonde of god and by his suffraunce/ be it meselerye or mayme or maladye/ And yf he reproue hym vncharitably of synne/thou holour/ thou dronkelewe harlot and so forth therme appertayneth it to vrioysynge of the deuyl that euer hath ioye that men doo synne/And certes chydynge may not come but of vilens herte/ For after habundaunce of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte/ And ye shul vnderstande What ony may chastiseth another that he be waar fro chidynge or reprouynge/ For trewly but he be waar he may ful lightely quycken the fyre of anger and of Wrath Whiche that he shal not quenche/and yauenture sleeth hym that he myght chastyse With benignyte. For as saith Salamon/ The amyable tonge is the tre of lyf/that is to saye of lyf spirytuel/ And a dissaue tonge sleeth the spirytis of hym that is reprouyd/ Lo What saith seynt Austyn/ Ther is no thynge like the deuyllis childe as he

that ofte chideth / Seynt Poule saith eek / J seruaunt of
god behoue not to chide / And holde that chidyng is a vileyns
thing bitwixt alle maner folk / yet is hit certes most vn
couenable bitwix a man and his wyf / For there is neuer
reste / And therfore saith Salamon / Ay hous that is vn
couerd in rayn and droppyng / and a chidyng wyf be like
a man that is in a droppyng hous in many placis / though
he eschue the droppyng in one place / hit droppeth on hym in
another place / So farith it by a chydyng wyf but she chide
hym in one place she wyl chyde hym in another place / +
And therfore better is a morsel breed with ioye / than
an hous ful of delytes with chydyng / Lo what Sala-
mon and seynt Paule sayn / O ye women be ye subgettis
to your husbondis as behoueth in god / + And ye men
loue your wyuys / + Afterward speke we of scornyng
Whyche is a wicked syme and namely whan he scornyth
a man by his goode werkis / + For certes suche scorners
savery lyke the foule tode that may not endure to smelle the
swete sauour of the lyne whan it floryssheth / Thyse scor-
ners bey partyng felalls with the deuyll for they haue
ioye whan the deuyl wymeth and sorow whan he lesith +
They be aduersarys to Jhesu Crist For they hatey that
he leueth that is to saye sauacion of soule / + Speke we
now of the wicked counceyl For he that wickyd coun-
ceyl peupth is a treytour + For he deceyueth hym that
trusteth in hym / + But natheles yet is wicked coun-
ceyl first ayenst hym self / For as saith the wyse man +
Euery fals lyuyng hath his propertie in hym self + For
he that wil anoye another may anoieth first hym self +

And men shal vnderstande that a man shal not take his counceyl of false folk ne of angry folk or greuous folk ne of folke that louen specially to muche her owen prouffyt/ne to muche worldly folk & namely in counselynge of soelis/ Also compth the synne of hem that maken discord among folk/ Whiche is a synne that Crist hateth vtterly/ And no wonder is/for he deyde for to make concorde/ And more shame doy they to Crist than dyde they that hym Crucyfyed For godi loueth better that frendship be among folk than he dyde his owen body Whiche he yaf for vnyte/ Therfore be they likenyd to the deuyl that euer is aboute to make dis; corde/ Also compth the synne of double tunge suche as spekē fair before men and wickedly behynde/or ellis they make semblaūt as though they spekē of goody entencion/or ellis in game and ply/ and they spekē of wicked entente. Also compth the wreyynge of counseil/ thurgh whiche mā is defamed/ Wherefore this may he restore the domage/ Also co; mpth manace that is an open foly/ For he that openly me; naceth he threteneth more than he may ouercome ful ofte tyme/ Also comen ydle wordis that be without prouffit of hym that spekeith the wordes and eke of hym that her; keneth the wordes/ Or ellis ydle wordes ben tho that ben nedeles or without entent of natural prouffit/ And al be hit that ydle wordes be somtyme venyal synne/yet shal men doubte hem/ For he shal yeue reketenynge of hem before godi/ Also compth Jangelinge that may not come with; oute synne as saith Salamon/it is a signe of appert folye And therfore a philosopher sayde whan a man axedi hym how men sholdi plese/ And he answerde do many goody

werkis & spekē selde Jangelyngis / After this cometh the
the synne of Japers that ben the deuillis apis For they make
folk to laughe at her Japerye / as folk doon atte galdes of an
ape Suche Japis defendeth saint Poule Loke how that vertu
ous wordes & holy conforten hem that trauayleñ in the seruise
of Crist / Right so comforten the vileyns wordes & the knac /
kis of Japers hem that trauayleñ in the seruise of the deuil
Alle thyse ben the synnys of the tunge that comyn of Ire
and of other synnys + The remedye ayenst Ire is a vertu
that clepen manſuetude that is debonairte / and eke another
vertu that men clepen pacience / Seynt Jherome saith thus
of debonairte that it doth harm to no wight ne saith none
harm that men hym do ne seyn ne changeth not ayenst reson
This vertu cometh somtyme of nature For as saith ỹ philo
sopher a man is a quyk thing by nature debonair & tretable
by goodnes But whan debonairte is enfourmed of grace it
is the more worthy / Pacience is another remedye ayenst yre &
is a vertu ỹ men suffre suetely euery mānes goodnes / and is
not wroth for none harme ỹ is doon to hym / The philosopher
saith / that pacience is that vertu that suffreth debonarely al ỹ
outrage of aduersite / & euery wicked word / This vertu ma
keth a man like to god & maketh hym his owen deve childē +
as saith crist this vertu discōfiteth thin enemye And therfore
saith the wise man yf thou wolt venquyshe thin enemye see ỹ
thou be paciente / Suffrance is another vertu ayenst Ire / and
that is whan he suffreth swetely alle anoyance & the wrongis
that men do a man outward / Thou shalt vnderstande that
a man suffreth iiij maner of greuances in outward thingis
Ayenst which foure he must haue foure maner of pacience +

The firste greuance is wicklyd wordes / that greuaunce suf
fryd Jhesu Crist wythoute grutchyng wel paciently whan
the Jewes despisyd hym and reprouyd hym ful ofte / Suf
fre thou therfore pacientlȳ / for the wyse may saith yf thou
stryue with a fool / yf the fool be wroth or though he laugh
Algate thou shalt haue no reste That other greuance out
ward is to haue domage of thy catel / There ayenst suf
fryd Crist ful paciently whan he dispoylyd was of alle that
euer he hadȳ in this lyf̄ that nas but clothis / The thirde
greuance is to a man to haue greuance in his body / that suf
fryd Crist ful paciently in al his passion / The fourthe gre
uance is in outrageous labour in werkis / Wherfore I saye
that folk ȳ makeȳ her seruantes to trauayle to greuously
out of tyme as in holy dayes / sothly they do gret synne / here
ayenst suffredȳ crist ful paciently andȳ taught vs pacience
whan he bare vpon his blessidȳ sholdres the crosse vpon which
he sholdȳ suffre despitous deth / here may meȳ lerne to be pa
cient / For certes not only cristeȳ meȳ be pacient for the loue
of Jhesu Crist andȳ for guerdon of the blysse of heuen andȳ
of the blessydȳ lyf that is perdurable / But certes the olde
paynems that neuer were crystendȳ comendidȳ andȳ lyfdȳ
the vertu of pacience / A philosophre vpon a tyme that wolde
haue beteȳ his disciple for his grete trespaas / for whiche he
was gretly ameuydȳ andȳ brought a yerdȳ to scourge the
childȳ / Andȳ whan the childȳ salde the yerdȳ he saidȳ to his
maister / What wil ye doo / I wil bete the quod the maister
for thy correctiȯn / For soth quod the childȳ ye ought first
correcte your self that haue lost your pacience for the gilt of
a childȳ / For soth saidȳ the maister al weppyng thou saist

ſeth haue thou the yerdy my dere ſone and dy correcte me for
myy vnpacience / Of pacience comith obedience thurgh Which
a may is obedyent to Criſt and to alle hym to Whyche he
ought to be obedyent in Criſt / And vnderſtande wel that
obedyence is parfight Whan mey do gladly & haſtely With
goody herte entierly al that he ſholdy do / Obedyence gene-
rally is to perfourme the doctryne of gody and dy his ſo-
uereyns to Whiche hym ought to be obeyſſant in al right-
fulnes +

Sequitur de Accidia +

After the ſynne of Wrath I Wil ſpeke of the ſynne of
accidye or ſlouth + For enuye blyndeth the herte of
may / And Ire troubleth a may / And accidye maketh hym
heuy thoughtful and Wralde / Enuye and Ire makey bitter-
nes in herte / Whiche bitternes is moder of accidye & benymeth
hym the loue of al goodnes / therme is accidye the angre of
a trouble herte / And ſaynt Auſtyn ſaith It is annoye of
goodnes and annoye of harm / Certes this is a dampnable
ſynne + For it doth Wronge to Jheſu Criſt in as muche as
he benymeth the ſeruiſe that mey ought to do to Jheſu Criſt
With al diligence As ſaith Salamon / But accidye doth
none ſuche diligence / He doth alle With annoye & Wraldnes
Slaknes / excuſacion / dulnes & vnluſt + For Whiche the book
ſaith a curſidy be he that doth the ſeruiſe of god necligently +
therme is accidye enemye to euery eſtate of mā For the eſtate
of mā is in iij + maners / Eyther it is eſtate of Jnocence as
Was ỳ ſtate of adam dy before or that he fyl in to ſynne in Which
eſtate he Was holde to Worche as in herimgy & adouring of god
Another eſtate is eſtate of ſupfluyte / In Whiche eſtate mey

he holdeth to labour in prayng to god for amendement of her synnys / Another estate is in the estate of grace / In Whiche estate is he holden to do Werkis of penytence / And certes to alle these thingis is accidye enemye and contrary for he loueth no besynes at all / Wold certes this foule synne of accidye is eke a ful gret enemy to ỳ liuelod of the body For it hath no purueance ayenst temporel necessite / For it is slouthyd and forslogyd and destroyeth al goodes temporel by vecheliesnes / The fourth thyng is that accidye is lyke hem that ben in the peyne of helle be cause of slouthe & of her heuynes / For they that be dampned be so bounde that neyther may they do Wel ne thynke Wel / Of accidye cometh first that a man is anoyd & encombrid to doo ony goodnes and maketh that god hath abhominacion of suche accidye as saith seynt John / Wold cometh slouthe that Wil suffre no hardnes ne no penance / For soth slouth is so delicate and so tendre as saith Salamon that he Wil suffre noy hardnes ne penance and therfore he shendeth al that he doth Ayenst this wtyn horyd synne of accidye or slouthe shold men exercyse hem to doo goody Werkis and manly and vertuously cacchen corage Wel to doo / Thynkyng that our lord Jhesu Crist quytith euery goody dede be it neuer so litil Vsage of it is a grete thinge / For it makyth as sayth seynt Bernard the labourer to haue stronge armys and hardy synewis / and slouth makith hem feble and tendre Thay comyth drede for to begynne to Werke ony goody Werkis / For certes he that is inclined to synne hym thinketh it is to grete an empryse for to vndertake to doo Werkis of goodnes as saith seynt Gregorie / Wold comyth Wanhope

that is dispair of the mercy of god that comyth somtyme
of to muche outrageous sorow and somtyme of mykyl
drede ymagenyng that he hath do so muche that it wold not
auaylle hym though he wold repente hym and do good.
thurgh whiche dispeyr or drede, he haboundeth his herte
to euery maner synne As saith seynt Austyn, whiche
that is dampnable yf it contynue to his ende, hit is cle-
ped synnyng in the holy goste, This horryble synne is so
perylous that he that is dispeyred that ther is no felonye
ne no synne that he doubtyth for to do as shewd wel by
Judas, certes themne abouen alle is this synne most dis-
playsaunt and most aduersary to Crist, certes he that
dispeyreth is lyke the cowardy champyon recreaunt & nede-
les dispeyreth, For certes the mercy of god is euer redy to
the penitent, hit is aboue al his werkis, Alas can not a
man bethynke hym on the gospel of saynt luke, Luce y^o
Where as Crist saith that as wel shal ther be more ioye in
heuen vpon a sinful man that doth penitence than vpon nyenti
and nyne rightful men that neden no penitence, loke ferther
in the gospel the ioye and the feestis of the good man that
had lost his sone, whan his sone with repentaunce was re-
tourned to his fader, Can they not remembre eke as saith
saint luke xxiij^o. how that the theef that was honged beside
Jhesu, Sayde lord remembre on me whan thou comest to thy
Regne, forsoth saide Crist, this day shalt thou be with me in
paradys, certes ther is none so horrible synne of man that it
ne may in his lif be destroied by penitence thurgh vertu of ỳ
passion of Crist, Alas what nedeth man themne to be dispey
red sithen his mercy is so redy, aske & haue, Themne cometh

ſompnolence that is ſluggy ſlumbrynge whyche makith a
man to be heuy andy dul in body andy in ſoule/ Andy this
ſynne comyth of ſlouthe/ Andy certes the tyme as by reye
of reſon men ſholdy not ſlepe that is by the morow but yf
it were cauſe reſonable/ For ſothe in the morow is moſt co-
uenable a man to ſaye his prayers andy for to thynke on
gody andy to honoure gody andy to yeue almes to the poure
that firſt comen in the name of Criſt/ Lo what Salamon
ſaith / who ſo wil by the morow awake to ſeke me he ſhal
fynde me/ Thenne cometh negligence or recheleſnes that rec
keth of no thyngy / Andy holde that ignorance is moder of
alle harme/ Certes negligence is the norice / negligence doth
no fors whan he ſhal do a thingy whether he do it wel or badly
Of the remedy of thyſe two ſynnys as ſaith the wiſeman
that he that dredeth gody ſparith not to doo that hym ought
to doo / andy he that louyth gody wil do diligence to pleſe
gody by his werkis andy haboundey hym ſelf with al his
myght wel for to doo / Thenne cometh ydlenes that is the
yate of alle harmys ay ydle man is lyke to a place that hath
no walles the deuyl may entre on euery ſyde/ This ydlenes
is the thurrok of alle vilayns andy wickidy thoughtis andy
of alle janglis/ tryfflis & al ordure / Certes heuen is yeuen
to hem that wil laboure andy not to ydle men / Elle dauid
ſaith / That they be not in the labour of men ne they ſhal
not be whippedy with men that is to ſaye in purgatorye .
Certes thenne ſemyth it they ſhal be tormentidy with the
deuyl in helle/ but yf they do penytence / Thenne cometh the
ſynne that men clepe tarditas as whan a man it ſo lettydy
andy ſo taryedy or he wil turne to gody andy certes that is

a grete folye / he is lyke hym that falleth in the diche and
wil not aryse / And this vice cometh of fals hope that
he thynketh that he shal lyue longe but that hope faylleth
ful ofte / Thenne cometh laches that is he that whan he be-
gynneth ony good werk anoon he wil forlete hit and stynte
as do they that haue ony wyght to gouerne and take of
hym no kepe / Anone as they fynde ony contrary or ony
anoye / Thyse ben the nelbe shepherdes that leten her sheep
wytyngly go renne to the wolf that is in the breris and do
no force of her olbey gouernance / Of this cometh pouerte
and destruction both of spirytuel and temporel thingis.
Thenne cometh a maner of coldnes that fresith al the herte
of man / Thenne cometh vndeuocion thurgh whiche a man
is so blont As saith seynt Bernard and hath suche lan
gour in his soule that he ne may rede ne synge in holy chirche
ne here ne thynke of deuocion ne trauaylle with his hon-
des in no good werke but it is to hym vnsauery and al
apallid thenne wepith he fore sluggish and slumbry and
soon wil he be wroth and soon is enclyned to hate and
to enuye / And thenne cometh the synne of worldly so-
wh / that is cleped Tristicia / that sleeth a man as seith
seynt paule / For certes suche sorowh werkith to the deth of
the sowle and of the body also. For therof cometh that a
man is anoyed of his olbey lif for suche sorowe shortith the
lif of many a man or that his tyme come by way of kynde
Ayenst this horryble synne of accidye and the braunchis
of the same ther is a vertu that is callid fortitudo or streng
the that is affectyon thurgh whyche man dyspyseth al
suche thyngis noyous / . Thys vertu is so myghty

and so vigorous that it dar withstande mygthily and wrastle ayenst the salues of the deuyl and wisely kepe hym self fro perils that ley wicked. / For it enhaunsith and ensorsith the sowle / right as accidye abatith it and maketh it feble For this fortitudo may endure with longe suffrance the traueylis that ley couenable / This vertu hath many spicis the first is clepid magnanymyte that is to saye grete corage / For certes ther behoueth grete corage ayenst accidye leest that it swalowe the sowle by the syme of sowth or dis-troye it with wanhope / This maketh folk to vndertake hardy and greuous thingis by her olbey wil wisely and resonably / And for as muche as the deuyl fightith ayenst man more by queyntyse and by sleyght than by strengith therfore a man shal withstande hym by wit by reson and by discrecion / Theme ley ther the vertues of feyth and hope in god and in his saintis to achyeuen and compliss the good werkis in whiche he purposith fermly to contynue. Theme cometh sekrete and sikernesse / and that is whan a man deth and pfourmeth grete werkis of goodnes that he hath begunne / And that is the ende why men shold do goed werkis / For in the complisshyng of good werkis liseth the grete guerdon / Theme is the constance that is stablenes of corage / and thys shold be in herte by stedfast feyth and in mouth and in keryng / in chere and in dede Eke ther ley mo special thingis and remedies ayenst accidye in diuerse werkis & in consideracion of the peyne of helle and of the ioye of heuen / And in trust of the grace of the holy goost that wil yeue hym might to pfourme his entent

. Sequitur de Auaricia .

Hereafter acordyng now Wil I speke of auarycē and of co
uetyse of Whiche syme saith seynt Poule / The rote
of alle syme is couetyse . For sothly Whan the herte of a
man is confounded in hit self and troblid and that the
soule hath lost the comfort of god . Therme seketh he ay
ydle solas of Worldy thingis / Auarycē after descripcion of
seynt Austyn is a lecherousnes in herte to haue erthly thin
gis / Some other folke saye that auarycē is for to purchace
many erthly thyngis / and nothyng yeue to hem that haue
nede / And vnderstande Wel that auarycē is not oonly in
goody & in catel / but sumtyme in sciencē & in glorye & in euery
outrageous thingis is auarice & couetyse / And the diffe
rence betwene auarice and couetyse is this / Couetyse is for
to coueyte suche thingis as thou hast not / and auarice is to
Withholde & to kepe suche thingis as thou hast Without right
ful nede / Sothly this auarycē is a syme ful dampnable
for al holy Wryt arsith hit & speketh ayenst hit for it doth
Wrong to Jhesu Crist . For hit bereuyth fro hym the loue
that men to hym owen and torneth hit backward ayenst al
reson and makyth that the auarous man hath more hope
in his catel than in Jhesu Crist . And therfore saith seynt
Paule / that an auarous man hath more hope in his thral
dom of ydolatrye than in god / What difference is betwix
an ydolastre & an auarycious man / paventure an ydolastre
hath but on mawmet or two / And the auaricious man hath
many . For certes euery floreyn in his cofre is his mawmet .
And certes the syme of mawmetrie god forbedeth in ỳ ten co
mandemēts as bereth Witnes Exo . xx c° . Thou shalt haue no
false goddis bifore me ne ỳ shalt make to ỳ no grauid thing

But an auaricious man louyth more his tresour forgid
And thurgh this syme of auarice and of Couetyse co;
myth thyse hardy lordshippis thorugh whiche men be strey;
nedy by talagis customs and arriagis more than her dute
or reson is/or els take they of her bonde men ameramentis
whiche myght more resonably be callyd extorsions than
amerciamentis / Of whiche amerciamentis & raunsonyngis
of bonde men some lordis stywardis sayn that it is right;
ful/for as mykyl as a chorle hath no temporel thing that
it ne is his lordis as they sayn / But certis thyse lord;
shipis don wronge that reseruen her bonde folkis thinges that
they neuer yaf hem/Augustinus de Ciuitate dei libro. iy°.
Sayth that soth is that the condicyon of thraldom and
the first cause of thraldom is for synne/Genesis. v°. thus
may ye see that the gilte deserueth thraldom and not na;
ture/wherfore thyse lordes shold not glorye hem in her lord
shippis/sith that by naturel condicion they be not lordis of
her thrallis / but that thraldom com first by synne / And
ferthermore ther as the lawe sayth that temporel lordes of
bonde folk ben the goodes of her lordshippis / ye that is for
to vnderstonde the goodis of the emperour to defende hem in
her right but not to robbe hem ne to reue hem / And ther;
fore sayth Seneca / Thy prudence shold lyue benygnely
with thy thral/that thou clepest thy thral ben goddis peple
For humble folk ben cristes frendes / they be contubernyal
with the lordy / Now cometh disceyt betwene marchaunt
and marchaunt/And thou shalt vnderstande that mar;
chandyse is in many maners / That one is bodily and
that other is goostly / that one is lefful / And that other

is dishoneſt and vnleeffful / That bodily marchandyſe that is leeffful and honeſt is this / that there as god hath ordeynd that a Royame or a contre is ſuffycyent to hym ſelf it is honeſt and leeffful that the habondance of this contre may helpe another contre that is more ne ; deſful / + And therfore ther muſte be marchandyſe to bryngе from on contre to another their marchandyſe / + That other marchandiſe is that men haunten falſe othis with fraude trecherye and diſceyt with leſyngis curſid and dampnable / Spirytuel marchandyſe is properly ſy monye / that is ententyf deſire to thing ſpirytuel / that is thing that appertayneth to the ſeyntuary of god and to cure of ſoule / This deſyre yf ſo be that a man do his dyligence to perfourme hit / al be it that his deſyre take non effect / yet is it to hym a dedely ſyme / and yf he be ordeynd he is Irreguler / + Certes ſymonye is cleped of Symon Magus that wold by temperall catell haue bought the yeft that god had yeuen by the holy goſt to ſeynt Petir and to the apoſtlis / And therfore vnder ; ſtonde ye that both he that ſellith and he that byeth thing ges ſpyrytuel ben cleppd ſymonyaks / be it catel be it procuryng or by fleſſhly prayers of his frendes or of ſpi ; rytuel frendis / + Fleſſhly in two maners as by kynred and by other frendis / ſothly yf they pray for hym that is not able ne worthy / it is ſymonye yf he take the bene fyce / And yf he be worthy and able it is none / That other maner is whan men or women prayen for folke to auance hem only for wicked fleſſhly affection that they haue to the perſones / that is foul ſymonye / But certis

in seruyse for Whiche men yeue thingis spirytuel vnto ther seruauntis it muste be vnderstande that the seruyse be ho-neste or els not/And eke that it be Withoute targanyng and that the persone be able/For as saith saynt Damas Alle the synnys of the Worldy at regardy of this synne ben as thingy of nought/For it is the gretteste synne that may be after the synne of lucifer and of antiecryst/For by this synne gody forlesith the chirche and the soule that he boughte With his precyous bloody by hem that yeuyn chirchis to hem that be not digne/For they put in theuys that stelyn the soulis of Jhesu Crist and distroye his patrymonye/By suche vndigne preestis and curates haue men the lesse reuerence of the sacramentis of holy chirche/And suche yeuers of chirchis put out the childrey of Crist and put in to the chirchis the deuyllis olden childrey/They selley the soules that shal kepe the lambis to the Wolf that strangle hem. And therfore shal they neuer haue parte of the pasture of lambis that is the blisse of heuen/Mold comyth hasardrye With his appertenauntis as tablis/quardes and reuellis. of Whiche comyth disceyt false othis/chidyngis/and alle raueyns/blasfemyngis/reynyng of god/hate of his neyghbours/Waste of goodis/myspendyng of tyme/And some tyme manslaghter/Certes hasardours may not be With oute grete synne Whyles they hauntyn that craft/Of auarycer comyth eke/lesyngis/thefte/fals Witnes/and falsse othis/And ye shal vnderstande that these ben grete synnys and expres ayenst the comandements of god as I haue saidy Fals Witnes is eke in Wordy and in dede/In Wordy as to bereue thy neyghbours goody name by thy fals Witnessyng

or accuseſt hym by thy falſe witnes/or ellis excuſeſt thy ſelf falſely/ware ye queſtmongers and notaryes/Certes for falſe witnes was ſuſanne in greete ſorowe and peyne and many another mo/The ſyme of theſte is expreſſe also a-yenſt goddes heeſt/And that in two maners/temporel & ſpirytuel/The temporel theft is as for to take thy neyghbours catel ayenſt his wil be it by fors or by ſleyght be it in metyng or meſure/by ſtelyng by falſe endytements vpon hym/and in borowyng thy neyghbours catel in entent neuer to paye and ſemblable thingis/Spirytuel theſte is ſacrylege that is to ſaye ontyng of holy thyngis/or of thyngis ſacryd to crist in two maners/by reſon of the holy place/As chirchis and chircheyerdis for euery violent ſyme that men do in ſuche places may be clepid ſacrylege. Also they that falſely withholde the rightes of holy chirche. And pleyn and generally ſacrylege is to yeue holy thing out of holy place/or vnholy thyng out of holy place/or holy thyngs out of vnholy place/Now ſhal ye vnderſtande that releuyng of auarycs is myſerycorde and pyte largely taken/And men myght aye why that myſerycorde and pyte is releuyng of auarycs/Certes the auaricyous may ſhewith no pyte ne myſerycorde to the nedeful man. For he delitith hym in kepyng of his treſour/and not in the reſcowyng ne in the releuyng of hys euen cryſten/. And therfore ſpeke I firſt of myſericorde/Thenne is myſericorde As ſaith the philoſophre a vertu by whiche corage of man is ſtyred by the myſeſe of hym that is myſeſid. vpon the whiche myſerycorde with pyte in perfournyng of charytable werkis of mercy helpeth and comforteth

hym that is myſeſed/And certes this meueth men to the miſericorde of Jheſu Criſt that hym ſelf ſuffrid for our gilt He ſuffryd deth for miſericorde/And forgaf vs our origi nal ſymys/And therby releid fro the peyne of helle and amenuſid the peyne of purgatorye/The ſpicis of miſericorde ben as for to lene and elle for to yeue/and forto forgeue and for to releue/and for to haue pyte in herte and com; paſſion of myſchyef of thyn euen criſten/And elle chaſtyce there as nede is/Another remedye ayenſt auarice is reſo; nable larges/But ſothly here behoueth the conſideracion of our lord Jheſu Criſt and of his grace and of his tempo; rel goodis and elle of the goodis perdurable that Criſt yaf vs/and elle to haue remembrance of the deth that he ſhal dye and receyue/and he woot not when/And elle that he ſhal forgoon alle that he hath diſpendid and goten in goodis/But for as muche as ſome folk be vnmeſurable. men oughten eſchewe foolargeſſe that men clepen waſt. Certes he that is foollarge he yeueth not his catel but he leſith his catel/Certes what thinge that he yeueth for vayn glorye as to mynſtrals and to folk that bere his renome in the world he hath do ſyme and none almes/Certes he leſith folkle his goody and ſeleth no thyng but ſyme/he is lyke to an hors that ſeketh rather to drynke droppy wa; ter and troubly/than water of the cleer welle/To hem ap perteyneth the maliſon that Criſt ſhal yeue atte day of dome to hem that ſhulle be dampned.

¶ Sequitur de Gula.

After auarice comyth glotonye/Whiche is expreſſe ayenſt the comandement of god./Glotonye is

Immesurable appetyte to ete or to drynke / or els to ete vn-
mesurably and out of tyme more than nedeth is glotonye
This syme corrupteth al this World as is wel shewid
in the syme of Adam and Eue / To eke What saith seint
Paule of glotonye / Many men saith he of Whiche I haue
ofte said you / and now I saye hit Weping that they be
enemyes of the crosse of Crist / of Whiche the ende is deth
and of Whyche her Wombe is her god / And her glorye
in confusyon of hem that so seruyn erthely thyngys / He
that is vsaunt to thys syme of glotonye / He may no
syme Withstande / He mote be in seruage of alle vices
for it is the deuyllis horde there he hydeth hym in and vest
tyth / + This syme hath many spyces / The first is
dronkenes / that is the horrible sepulture of mannes re-
son / And therfore When that a man is dronke / he hath
lost his reson and thys is dedely syme / + But certes
When a man is not Wont to straunge drynkis / and per
auenture knoWeth not the strength of the drynke or hath
feblenes in his hede or hath trauayled thurgh Whiche he
drynketh the more / al be he sodeynly caught With drynke
it is no dedely syme but venyal + The second spyce of
glotonye is / that the spyryte of a man Wexith al trouble
For dronkenes bereueth hym discrecyon of his Wytt / +
The thirde spice of glotonye is When a man deuoureth
his mete and hath no rightful maner of etyng + The
fourthe is When thurgh the grete habundaūce of his mete
the humours of his body ben distemperyd + The fifthe
is forzetfulnes by to muche drynkyng / For Whyche a
man forzetyth by the morowe What he dyde ouer eue / +

In another maner ley distynate the spyces of glotonye after seynt Gregore/The first is for to ete byfore tyme/The Seconde is whan a may getith hym to deliate mete/The thirde is whan mey takey to mykil ouer mesure/The .iiij. is curyosite with grete entente to makey and apparayle his mete/The fyfthe is for to ete gredily/These ley the fyue fyngers of the deuyll is honde by whiche he drawith folk to synne/Ayenst glotonye is the remedye Abstynence of his body as saith Galyene/but that holde I not meritorye yf he do it only for hele of his body/Seynt Austyn wole that abstynence be do by vertu and with pacience/Abstinence he saith is litil worth/but yf he haue goody wille/and but he be enforcyd by pacyence and by charyte/and that mey do it for godis sake/and in hope to haue the blisse in heuene/The felaws of abstinence ley attemperance that holdeth the mene in alle thingis eke shame that eschewith al dishoneste suffisance that seekith no riche metis ne drynkis ne doth no force of none outrageous apparayllyng of mete Also that restreyneth by reson the delaure appetyte of etyng and drynkyng/Sobrenes also that restreyneth the outrage of drynke/Sparyng also that restreyneth the delicat ease to sitte longe at his mete/Wherfore some folk stondey of her owhey with whan they ete be cause they wil ete at lasse leyser./

Sequitur de Luxuria.

After glotonye thenne vompeth lecherye/For thyse two synnys ley so nyghe eosyns that ofte tyme they wyl not departe/Body wost this synne is ful displaysawnt to godey/For he sayde hym self do no lecherye/Andy therfore

he putteth grete peynes ayenst this synne For in tholde lawe
yf a Woman thral were taken in this synne she shold be
beten with stanys to the deth / And yf she were a gentyl
Woman she sholde be slayn with stonys / And yf she were
a bisshops doughter she sholde be brent by goddis comande-
ment / Furthermore for the synne of lecherye god dreynt al
the World / And after that he brent fyue cytees and sanke
them in to helle . Now lete vs speke therme of the synne of
lecherye that men clepen auoultrye that is of Wedded folke
that is to saye yf that one of hem be Wedded or els both .
Seynt John saith that thauoltrers shul be in helle in a
stynkyng bremyng pyt of fyre & braymstony . For lecherye
is likened to braymstony for the stynke of her ordure . Certes
the bereuyng & breking of this sacramēt is an horrible thinge
Hit Was made of god hym self in paradyse & confermed by
Jhesu Crist / As saith seynt Mathew in the gospel / A man
shal lete fader & moder & take hym to his Wyf / and they shal be
two in one flessh / This sacrament betokeneth the knyttyng
to gyder of Crist & of holy chirche / And not only that god
forbad auoltry in dede / but eke he comanded that þ sholdest
not couete thy neyghbours Wyf / In this hest saith saint
Austyn / Al maner couetyse to do lecherye is forbode / Lo
What saith seynt Mathew in the gospel Who so seeth a Womā
to couetyse of his lust / He hath don lecherye With her in his
herte / Here may ye see that not only the dede of this synne
is forbode / but eke the desyre to do that synne / This cursid
synne anoyeth greuously hem that it haunte and first to
the soule . For he obligeth it to synne and to peyne of deth
that is perdurable / and to the body anoyeth it greuously

For it dryeth hym/ and of his blood he maketh sacrifyce to the fende of helle/ hit wasteth his catel & his substance And certes yf it be a foule thinge a man to waste his catel on women/ yet is hit a fouler thinge that whan for suche ordure women spenden vpon men her catel and substance This synne as saith the prophete byreuyth a man and a woman her goode fame and al her honour/ and it is ful playsant to the deuyl/ For therby wynneth he the moste party of this worlde/ And right as a marchant delyteth hym moste in chaffare that he hath moste auauntage of/ right so delyteth the fende in this ordure/ This is that other hand of the deuyl with fyue fyngers to cacche the peple to this vilony/ The first fynger is the foule lokynge of the fool woman that sleeth right as the basilicok sleeth folk by the venym of his sight/ For couetyse of the eyen folowyth the couetyse of the herte/ The seconde fynger is the vilayns touchynge in wickidy maner/ And therfore saith Salamon That who so touchith and handelith a woman/ he fareth lyke hym that handelyth the scorpion that stynggyth and sodeinly sleeth thurgh his enuemynynge or as who so touchyth pyache he shendeth his fyngris/ The thirde is foule wordes that fareth lyke fyre that brennyth right anon brennyth the herte/ The fourthe is kyssinge And trewly he were a grete fole that wolde kysse the mouth of a brennynge ouyn or of a furneys/ And more foolis ben they that kyssen in vilony/ For that mouth is the mouth of helle/ And namely thyse olde dotardis holours yet wil they kysse though they may not doo and smater hem/ Certes they be lyke to houndis/ For ay hound whan he cometh by

the Poser/or by other tenchis yf he may not pysse yet Wil he
hyue vp his legge and make countenaunce to pysse/And
for that may Wenyth that he may not synne for lichorousnes
that he doth With his Wyf/Certes that oppynyon is fals
God Wot a man may slee hym silf With his owen knyff
and make hym dronke With his owen tonne/Certes be it
Wyf or chylde or Worldly thing that he louith before god.
it is his mawmet/and he is an ydolastre/Man shold loue
his Wyf by discrecion paciently and attemperatly/And
than is she as though she were his suster/The fyfte synger
of the deuyllis hond is the stynkyng dede of lecherye/He
gryppeth hym by the reynes for to throwe hym in to the fur
neys of helle/there as they shal haue the fyre and the Wor
mys that euer shal laste/Wepyng and Waylyng/sharp
hunger and thirst Grisslynes of deuillis that shulle al to
trede hym Without respite and Withouten ende/Of lecherye
as I sayde sourden diuerse spyces as fornicacion that is be
tWix man and Woman that bey not maryed and this is
dedely synne and ayenst nature/And destruction to nature
is ayenst nature/Perfay the reson tellith hym eke that it is
dedely synne for as muche as god forbad lecherye/And seynt
Poule yeueth hym the regne that is due to no Wight/but to
hem that do no dedely synne/Another synne of lecherye is to
bereuen a mayde of her maydenhede/For certes he that so doth
he crachyth a mayde out of the hyest degre that is in thys
present lyf/And bereueth her that precyous fruyt that the
book clepeth the hundred fruyt/I can say it none other Wyse
in englissh/but in latyn it hight centesimus fructus/Certes
he that so doth is cause of many domages and Vilonyes mo

thay ony may ony reken / right as he somtyme is cause of alle damages that bestis doo in the felde that breketh the hegge of the closure / thurgh whiche he destroieth that may not be restored / For certis nomore may maydenhede be restored . than ony arme that is smyten fro the body may retorne ayen to weye / She may haue mercy this woot I wel / yf she do penytence / but neuer shal it be / but that she is corupt / and al be it soo that I haue spoke somwhat of auoultrye / it is good to shewe mo perylls that longen to auoultry for to eschue the foule synnys of auoultrye / In latyn it is for to saye thapprochyng of another mannys bed / thurgh whiche they that were one flessh habounden her bodyes to other per; sones / Of thys synne as sayeth the wyseman come many harmys First brekyng of feith And certis feith is keye of Cristendome / And whan that keye is broken and lory Certeyn cristendom standith without fruyt / This synne is eke theefte for theefte generally to speke of / is for to reue a thyng of a man ayenst his wille / Certis this is the foul; lest theefte that may be / whan a woman steleth her body from her husbond and yeueth it to her holour to defoule it / and stelyth her soule from Crist and yeuyth hit to the deuyll . This is a foule theefte for to stele and breke the Chalys . For thyse auoultreris breken the temple of gods spirytu; elly and stelyn the vessel of grace / that is the body and the soule / For whiche Crist shal destroye hem as saith seynt Paule / Soothly of thys theefte doubtyd gretly Joseph . whan that his lordis wyf praid hym of vilonye whan he said / Lo my lady / lold my lord hath take to me vnder my ward al that he hath in this world / ne nothyng is out of

my power but only ye that be his wyf / and yow shold J-
therme do this wickidnes and synne so horrible ayenst god
Alas al to litil is suche trouth nold y founde / The thirde
harm is / the fylthe thurgh whiche they breke the coman-
dement of god and defoulde the alter of her matrymonye
that is Crist. For certis in so mykyl as the sacrament of
mariage is so noble and so digne so muche it is the gretter
synne to breke it. For god made mariage in paradyse in
the state of Innocencye to multiplye mankynde to the ser-
uyse of god / And therfore is the brekyng therof greuous
Of whiche brekyng comyn fals heyres / ofter tyme that
wrongfully occupien folkis heritagis / And therfore wil
Crist put hem out of the Reygne of heuen that is heritage
to goode folk / Of this brekyng comyth eke that folk vn
waar wedde / or synne with her owen kynrede / And namely
the harlottis that haunten bordellis / Thise fool women mowe
be likenyd to a comyn gonge where as men purge her ordure
What saye we eke of putyers that lyuen by the horyble
synne of putrye / and constreyne women ye some her owen
wyues or his childe as doy thyse bawdis to yelde hem a cer-
teyn rente of her bodily putrye / Certis thyse ben cursid
synnys / Vnderstonde ye eke that aduoultrye is set comynly
in the ten comandementis bitwene thefte and manslaghter
For it is the gretteste thefte that may be. For it is thefte
of body and of sowle / And it is lyke to homicyde / For
it kerupth a two hem that first were made one flesh /.
And by the olde lawe they shold be slayn / but natheles
by the lawe of Jhesu Crist that is the lawe of pyte / whan
he sayd to the woman that was founde in auoutrye /.

and ſholdy haue be ſlayn with ſtones after the wil of the Jewis as was her lawe / Soo quod Jheſu Criſt and haue nomore will to do ſynne / Sothly vengeance of auoultrye is awardedy to the pryn of helle / but it be diſtourbydy with penaunce / Yet ley ther mo ſpyces of this aurſidy ſynne as whan that one of hem is religyous or ellis lothe / or of folk that ley entrydy in to ordre as Subdekey / or dekey / preſt / or hoſpitalers / and euer the hyer that he is in order / the gretter is the ſynne / For they haue made grete lowes to kepe Chaſtite / This ſynne of breking of his auowde of chaſtite is whan he reſceyuedy order / And ſoth it is that holy order is chief of alle the treſour of gody and is a ſpecial ſigne and mark of chaſtite whiche that is the moſt precyous lyf that is / And eke this ordrid folk ley ſpecially titledy to gody for whiche whan they doo dedly ſynne / they ley the ſpecyal traytours of gody and of his pple / For they lyue by the pple to praye for the pple / And whyles they be ſuche traytours her prayers auayle not to the pple / Preſtis ley as aungellis as by the myſtery of her dignyte / But forſothe ſaynt Paule ſaith that Sathanas transfourmeth hym in ay aungel of light / Sothly the preſt that haunteth ſynne he may be likenedy to ay aungel of derknes transformedy in to ay aungel of light / He ſemeth ay aungel of light. but forſothe he is ay aungel of derknes / Suche preſtis ley the ſonys of hely as is ſhewdy in the book of kynges that they were the ſonys of Belyal / that is the deuyll / Belial is to ſaye withouten Juge / And ſo farey they / hem thynketh that they be fre and haue no Juge nomore than hath a free bole that taketh whiche bolle that hym liketh in the

soun / so sarey they be Women / For right as a fre hole is
ynolbh for al a boun / right so is a corupt preest ynolbh for
al a paryth or a contre / Thyse preestis as saith the book
knolbe not the mynistery of preesthode to the peple ne to gody
ne they holde hem not a paidy as saith the book of sode flesh
that was to hem offryd / But they take by force the flesh
that is ralbe / Certis right so thyse shrelbis holde hem not
a paydy of rosted flesh and sodey with whyche the pepyl
sedey hem in grete reuerence / but they will haue ralbe flesh
as sollus whyys and her doughters / And certis thyse
Women that consentyn to her harlottis do grete wronge to
Crist & to holy chirche / to alle halowis and to alle soulis / for
they hereuyn hem al that sholdy worship Crist & holy chirche +
and also to prayen for al cristen soulis / And therfore haue
suche preestis & her lemans that consentyn to her lechery the
malison of the cristen court til they come to amendement / The
thrde spyce of auoultrye is somtyme betwix a man & his
wyf / And that is when they take no regarde in their assem
bling but only for flesshly delyte / as saith seynt Jherome
and recke of nothing but they be assemblid by cause they be
maried / All is goody y nolbh as thinketh to hem / But in
suche folk hath the deuil power as saide the aungel Raphael
to Tobye / For in her assembling they put Jhesu Crist out
of her herte / and yeue hem self to alle ordure / The fourth
spyce is of hem that assemblyn by her kynrede or of hem that
ben of one affinyte / or els with hem with whom her faders
had delid with the synne of lecherye / This synne maketh
hem like houndis that taken none hede of kynrede / And
certes parentela is in two maners / or gostly or flesshly +

goſtly is for to delyn with her goſſibs / For right ſo as a godfader is her fader ſpirytuel / For whiche a woman may in no leſſe ſynne ſemble with her goſſib than with her oldey brother / The fyfthe ſynne is that abhomynable ſynne of whiche noman ought to ſpeke of / ne wryte / natheles it is openly reherſid in holy wryt / Certes holy wryt may not be defouled more than the ſonne that ſhyneth on a donghill Another ſynne appertayneth to lecherye that comyth in ſlepyng / and this ſynne cometh ofte to hem that hey may dens and eke to hem that hey corupt And this ſynne is clepedy pollucion / that cometh in foure maners Somtyme it cometh of languyſſhyng of the body of man / Somtyme it cometh of Infirmyte for the feblenes of the vertu veten tyf as phyſik maketh mencyon / Somtyme of ſurfete of mete and drynke / and ſomtyme for violente thoughtis that hey encloſid in mannys mynde whan he goth to ſlepe. Whiche may not be with oute ſynne / For whiche men muſte kepe hem wiſely / or els may they ſynne greuouſly. Now cometh remedye ayenſt lecherye / and that is generally chaſtite and contynence that refreyneth alle diſordinat mauyngis that comyn of fleſhly talentis / And euer the gretter merite ſhal he haue that refreyneth moſt the wicked chauffyng or ordure of this ſynne. And this is in two maners / that is to ſaye chaſtite of mariage and chaſtite of wedowhede. Now ſhalt thou vnderſtande that Matrymony is leeffful aſſemblyng of man and woman that receyuen the vertue of the ſacrement / the bonde whiche that may not be departid in al her lyf / this is to ſaye whylis they lyue both. This is as ſayth the book a ful grete ſacrement. God made it

as J haue ſaidy in paradyſe andy wolde hym ſelf be borny in
mariage/andy forto halowe mariage he was atte weddingy
where he tornedy water in to wyn/whiche was the firſt mi-
racle that he wrought in erthe to forte his diſcyples/ The
twelfe effect of mariage clenſith fornicacion andy replenyſ-
ſhith holy chirche of goody lynage. For as the ende of ma
riage chaungith dedly ſynne in to kenyal bitwene hem that
ben wedded andy makith the hertis al one as wel of hem
as the bodyes/ Thus is ſe very mariage that is ſtabliſſhidy
by godyy or that ſynne begany whan naturel lawe was in his
right point in paradys/And it was ordeynedy that a wo-
many ſholdy haue but one many As ſaith ſaint Auſtyn by
many reſons/ Firſt that mariage is figuredy betwene Criſt
andy holy chirche/Andy another is that a many is bredy of
the womany algate by ordynaunce it ſholdy be ſo/ For yf a
womany hady mo meny thany one/therne ſholdy ſhe haue moo
bredis thany one/ andy that were ay horrible thyngy before
godyy/Andy eke a womany myght not plefe many folk at
ones/Andy alſo ther ſholdy neuer be pees ne reſte amongs
them for euerich wolde aſke his owen thynge/Andy fur-
thermore noman ſholdy knowe his owen engendure ne who
ſholdy haue his heritage/andy the womany ſholdy be laſſe lo-
uidy fro the tyme that ſhe were commyxt with many/Now
comyth how a many ſholdy lere hym with his wyf e namely
in two thingis that is to ſaye in ſuffraunce e in reuerence.
And this ſhewde firſt criſt whan he made firſt womany For
he made her not of adams bredy For ſhe ſholdy not haue to
grete lordſhip For there as the womany hath y maiſtrye ſhe
makith to muche diſaraye/ther nede none enſamplis of this

The experience that we haue day by day ought to suffyse/Also certes ne he made not the woman of the feet of Adam/for she sholde not beholde to lolde/for she can not paciently suffre/But god made woman of the ryb of Adam/For no man sholde be felawe vnto man/Man sholde here hym to his wyf.in fayth.in trouthe and in loue as seyth saynt Poule/and that man sholde leue his wyf as Crist dyde holy chirche that lourdy it so wel that he deyde for hit/So sholde a man for his wyf yf it were nede/Now holde that a woman sholde be subget to her husbonde that telleth seynt Peter and eke as saith the decree/a woman as longe as she is a wyf/she hath none auctorite to swere ne to bere wytnes wyth outen leue of her husbonde/And also she sholde be honest and attemprat of aray/I wote wel that they sholde sette her entente to plese her husbandes/but not by queyntyse of her aray/saint Jherome saith that wyuys hem apparayllyd in silk and in purpure maye not clothen hem in Jhesu Crist/seynt Gregore saith eke that no wighe seketh no precyous araye/but only vayn glorye to be honoured the more before the peple/hit is a grete folye a woman to haue grete aray outward and her self to be ful Inward/A wyf sholde eke be mesurable.in lokyng.in herying and in lawhyng and discrete in alle her wordes and her dedes/And aboue alle worldly thingis she sholde loue her husbonde with alle her herte and to hym be trewe of her body/So sholde euery husbonde eke be trewe to his wyf/for sithyn al the body is the husbondes so sholde her herte be also/or ellis ther is betwix hem no parfyt mariage as m that/Than shal a man vnderstande that for thre thingis a man and

his wyf mowe assemble / The first for thentent of gen-
dure of children to the seruise of god . For certis that
is the cause fynal of matrymony / That other is to yelde
euerych of hem the dette of her body / For neyther of hem
hath power of his owen body / The thirde is for tescheue
lecherye and lyonye / . The fourth forsothe is dedely
synne / As to the first it is meritorye / The seconde also
for the dedee saith she hath meryte for that she yeldith to
her husbonde the dette of her body / Ye though it be ayenst
her likyng and the luste of her herte / The thirde maner
whiche is tescheue lecherye / I holde it no dedely synne .
but many of thyse be not without venyal synne for the
corrupcyon and delyte therof / The fourth maner is to
vnderstande yf that they assemble only for amerouse loue
and for none of the forsayde causis but for tacomplissh
the bremyng delyte they recke neuer how ofte / sothly it
is a dedely synne / and yet wyth sorow some folk wyl
payne hem more to do than her appetyte suffyseth / The se
conde maner of chastyte is to be clene wydowe to eschewe
the brasynge of may & to desyre thembrasyngis of Jhesu
Crist / Thyse ben tho that haue ben wyues and haue for-
goon her husbondis / And eke women that haue don le
cherye / and be releuyd by penaunce / And certis yf that
a wyf may kepe her al chaste by licence of her husbonde / so
that she gaf no cause ner none occasion that he agiltyd
Hit were to here grete merite / These maner of women
that obseruen chastite muste be clene in herte as wel as in
body & in thought & mesurable in clothing & in contenaūce
Abstynent in etyng & drinkyng / in spekyng / & in dede

And theme is the vessel of the hope of the blissyd Mayd; deleyn that fulfilled holy chirche ful of goody odour. / The thirde maner of chastyte is Virginite / and hit behoueth that she be holy in herte and clene of body / theme is she the spouse to Jhesu Crist / and she is the lyf of aungellis / she is the preysing of this Worldy and she is as thyse martirs in Legalye / She hath in her that tonge may not telle / Virginyte have our lordy Jhesu Crist / and Virginite Was hym self Another remedye ayenst lecherye is specially to Withdralbe suche thyngis as yeuyn occasion to that vilony as etyngy and drynkyng. For certes Whan the pot boyleth strongly The beste remedy is to Withdralbe the fyre / Sleppyng longe in grete quyete is eke a grete norice to lecherye / Another remedye agaynst lecherye is that a Woman or a man eschelbe companye of hem by Whiche he demyth to be temptidy for al be it so that the dede be Withstande yet is their grete temptacion / Sothly a Whyte Wal al though it breme not fully by the stynkyng of a candel / yet is the Wal black of the light / In lyke Wyse ofte tymes suche persones haue ayl name be cause they dralbe in vicyous company / Wel ofte tyme haue I redy that noman truste in his olben perfection / but he be strenger than Sampson / holyer than Dauid / Wiser than Salamon / Now after as I haue declareds you as I can of the .vij. deedly synnys and some of her braunches and her remedyes / Sothly yf I coude I Wolde telle you the ten comandements / but so highe a doctryne I lete to diuines But natheles I truste to gody they be touchidy in thise tretyse euerich of hem alle.

Adhuc secunda pars penitencie.

Now as to the secondy part of penytence hit stont in confessyon of mouth as I began in the secondy chapitre to fore/Saint Austyn saith/Synne is in euery wordy and in euery dede/and al that men coueyten ayenst the lawe of Jhesu Crist/And this is for to synne in herte in mouth and in dede by thy fyue wyttis/that ben sighte heerynge/smellynge/tastynge or sauorynge/and felynge/Now is hit good to vnderstande the circumstancis that agruggen mikyl euery synne/Thou shalt considere what thou art that dost the synne/whether thou be male or female/yonge or oldy Gentil or theuk/free or seruaunt/wyse or fool/hool or syke/ Weddidy or syngle/ordrydy or vnordredy/clerk or secular/ Yf she be of thy kyndrede bodily or gostly or none/a mayde dey or none/in maner of homicyde or none/horryble grete synne or smal/and how longe thou hast contynuedy in synne The thirde Circumstaunce is the place where thou hast doy synne/Whether in other mens housis or in thyn owen/in felde or in chirche or in chircheyerdy/In chirche dedicate or non. For yf the chirche were halowedy and may or womany spylle his kynde within that place by wey of synne or by wicked temptacion the chirche were enterditedy til it were reconeyledy by the bisshop/And the preest shold be enterdited that dyde suche a vilonye/terme of his lyf & he shold nomore synge masse/and yf he dide he sholdy do dedely synne at euery tyme that he songe masse/ The .iiij. circumstance is by suche mediatours as by messangers or for entisement or for consentement to here company with felawship. For many one for to here felawship wil goo to the deuil of helle.

For they that eggeyn or consenten to the synne ben parte-
ners to the synne and of the dampnacion of the synnar.
The fyfthe is how many tymes that he hath synned and
it be in his mynde/and how ofte he hath falle/ For he that
ofte fallyth in synne he dispyseth the mercy of god and
exacerbeth his synne/ And is vnkynde to god/ And he
wexith the more feble to wistonde synne/ and synneth the
more lightly/and the latter aryseth/and the more eschueth
for to shryue hym/and namely to hym that hath ben his
confessour. For whiche that folk whan they falle ayen in
ther olde folyes they forletyn ther olde confessours al clerly
Or elles they departen ther shryfte in diuerse places/ But
sothly suche departyd shryfte deseruyth no mercy of god
for his synnys/ The sixthe circumstaunce is this why that
a man synneth/ as by what temptacion/ and of hym self
procure thilke temptacion/ or by excytyng of other folk/or
yf thou synne with a woman by force/or by her owen assent
Or yf the woman magre her hede haue be enforced or not.
and whether for couetyse or poverte/ Alle this shalt thou
telle/ And yf it was her procuryng or no and alle suche
maner thingis/ The seuenth circumstaunce is in what ma
ner he hath don his synne/or how that she hath suffred how
folk haue don to her/ and of the same shal the may telle
alle the circumstaunces/ And yf that he haue synned with
comyn hordel women or none/ in fastyng tymes or none.
or don his synne in holy tymes or none/or before his shrifte
Or after his latter shrifte/ and hath pauenture therfore
broken his penaunce enioyned/ by whos help and whos
counceyll/by sorcery or craft/al muste be told thyse thingis

after that they be grete or ſmale and greuge the conſcience of man or woman / And elle the preſt that is the Juge may the better be auyſed of his Juggement / in geuyng of his pe nance / and that ſhal be after his contricion. For vnder ſtonde wel that after tyme that a man hath defoulled his baptesme by ſynne / yf he wil come to ſaluacion / ther is none other weye but penaunce and ſhrifte & ſatiſfaction / and namely by the two / yf ther be a confeſſour to whom he may ſhryue hym / And that he firſt be very contryte and repen taunt / And the thirde yf he haue lyf to perfourme it / Therfore ſhal man loke and conſidere yf he wil make a trewe and a prouffytable confeſſion / ther muſte be foure condicions. Firſt hit muſte be in ſorouful bitternes of herte as ſayde the kynge Ezechye to god / I wil remembre alle the yeris of my lyf in the bitternes of my herte / This condicion of bitternes hath .v. ſignes / The firſt is that confeſſion muſte be ſhamefaſt not for to couereyn ne to hyde his ſynne / But for he hath agiltid his god & defouled his ſoule / and herof ſaith ſaint Auſtyn / The herte trauayleth for ſhame of his ſynne / and for he hath grete ſhamefaſtnes / he is digne to haue grete mercy / Whiche was the confeſſion of the pupli / canne that wolde not lyfte vp his eyen to heuen / for he had offendid god of heuen. For whiche ſhamefaſtnes he had anon the mercy of god / And therfore ſaith ſaint Auſtyn That ſuche ſhamefaſt folk ben nept forzeuenes and remiſ ſion / That other ſynne is humylite of confeſſion of whiche ſaith ſaynt Peter / Humbleth you vnder the mighty honde of god in confeſſion. For therby god forzeuyth the ſynnys for he allone hath power / This humylite ſhal be in herte

and̄ in signe outward̄. For right as he hath humylyte to
god̄ in his herte, Right so sholde he humble his body out-
ward̄ to the preest that sitteth in goddis place. For whiche
in no maner sithnys that Crist is soueraȳ and̄ the preest
mene and̄ mediatour bitwene ayst and̄ the synnar And̄
the synnar is lesse by wey of reson. Than sholde not the
synnar sytte as hyghe as his confessour, but knele byfore
hym or at his feet but yf maladye destourbe it. For he shal
not take kepe who syt there but in whos place he sitteth Anā
that hath trespaced̄ to a lord̄ and̄ compth for to axe mercy
and̄ make his accorde and̄ sette hym down anon by the lorde
Mey wolde holde hym outrageous and̄ not worthy so sone
for to haue remyssyon ne mercy. The thirde signe is that
thy chyfte sholde be ful of teres yf may may wepe. And̄
yf a may may not wepe with his bodily eyen, lete hym
wepe in his herte. Suche was the confessyon of saint Petir
For after he had̄ forsake Jhesu Crist he wente out & wepe
ful bitterly. The fourth signe is that he lete not for shame
to shryue hym and̄ shewe his confessyon. Suche was the
confessyon of Maudeleyn, that sparith for no shame of hem
that were at the feste, for to go to our lord̄ Jhesu Crist and̄
beknowe to hym her synne. The fyfthe signe is, that may
and̄ woman be obeyssaunt to receyue the penaunce that is
enioyned̄ hem. For certes Jhesu Crist for the gylt of one
man was obedyent to the deth. The seconde condicion of
very confessyon is that hit be hastely doon. For certes yf
a man had̄ a dedely wounde, euer the lenger that he taryed̄
to warisshe hym, the more wolde it corupte and̄ haste hym
to his deth. And̄ eke the wounde be the worse for to hele.

Right so fareth syme that longe tyme is in a mā vnshewd
Certis a man ought hastely to shewe his syme for many
causis/and for drede of deth that cometh ofte tyme so sodenly
& is in no certeyn what tyme it shal be ne in what place And
elle the lenger he tarieth the ferther is he fro Crist And yf
he abyde vnto his last day/scarsely may he shriue or amende
hym for his symys or repente hym for the greuous maladye
of his deth/And for as muche as he hath not in his lif her
kenyd Jhesu crist what he hath spoken vnto him/he shal crye
vnto our lordy at his last day & skarcely he shal herkeny hym
Vnderstonde that this condicon muste haue foure thinges.
First that thy shrifte be pourueid afore and auised/And
that a man ay shriue hym of his synnys be it of pryde or of
enuye & so forth With the spicis & circumstancis/And that
he haue comprehendid in his mynde the nombre & the grete
nes of his symys/and how longe he hath leyen in syme/and
elle that he be contrite of his symys/and be in stedefast pur
pos by the grace of gody neuer efte to falle ayen in syme to
Whiche he is inclined/also thou shalt shriue the of alle thy
symys to one mā/and not parcelmele to one may & parcel
mele to another/That is it to be vnderstande in thentent to
pley thy confession as for shame or drede for it nys but strang
ling in thy soule/For certes Jhesu crist is alle good/in hym
is none imperfection/And therfore he forgeuith al pfightly
& elis neuer a deel/I saye not yf ꝑ be assigned to the penetan
cer for certain syme that thou art bounde to shewe hym alle the
remenaunt of thy symys of Which ꝑ hast be shriuen of thy
curate but yf it like ꝑ of thin humilite/this is no depting of
shrifte/ne I say not there as I speke of diuision of cōfession

That yf thou haue licence to ſhryue the to a diſcrete and
ay honeſt preeſt / and where the liketh / and by the licence
of thy curate / that thou ne maiſt wel ſhryue the of alle thy
ſymnys / but lete no blot behynde / lete no ſyme be vntold
as fer as thou haſt remembraunce / And whan thou ſhalt
be ſhryuen of thy curate / telle hym eke alle the ſymnys that
thou haſt don ſyth thou were laſt ſhryuen / Also the thry
ſhryfte aſkith certeyn condicions / Firſt that thou ſhryue
the by thy fre will / not constreyned ne for ſhame of folk.
ne for maladye or ſuche thingis / for it is reſon that he that
treſpaceth by his fre will confeſſe his treſpaas / ne none
other may ſhal telle his ſyme / ne wraththe hym ayenſt the
preeſt for his amoneſſhyng to lete his ſyme. The ſeconde
condicion is that thy ſhryfte be lawful / that is to ſaye / thou
that ſhryueſt the / and eke the preeſt that herith thy confeſ-
ſion been trewly in the feith of holy chirche / and that a man
be not diſpayred of the mercy of Jheſu Criſt as Cayn and
Judas were / And eke a man muſte accuſe hym ſelf of his
owen treſpaas / and not another / but he ſhal blame and
wyte hym ſelf of his owen malice and of his ſyme and
non other / But nathles yf another man be encheſon of en-
tyſyng of his ſymnys / or yf the eſtate of a perſone be ſuche
by whiche his ſyme is agreggid or els that he may not
plenly ſhryue but he telle the perſone whiche he hath ſymrid
with / thenne may he telle / ſo that his entente be not to bac-
byte the perſone / but only to declare his confeſſion / Thou
ſhalt eke make no leſynge in thy confeſſion for humylyte
Peraduenture to ſaye that thou haſt do ſymnys of whiche thou
were neuer gilty / For ſeynt Auſtyn ſaith / yf thou by cauſe

of humylite makiſt a leſyngh of thy ſelf though thou were
not in ſynne a ſore/yet art thou in ſynne theme thurgh thy
leſynge / Thou ſhalt eke ſhelde thy ſynne by thy propre
mouth but thou be dom. be / andy not by letter / for thou that
haſt do ſynne/thou ſhalt haue the ſhame of thy confeſſion.
Thou ſhalt not eke peynte thy confeſſion by faire & ſubtil
wordes to couere the more thy ſynne For theme begyleſt thou
thy ſelf/andy not the preeſt/thou muſte telle it pleinly be it
neuer ſo horrible ne ſo foull/Thou ſhalt eke ſhriue the to a
preeſt that is diſcrete to counceyl the/And eke thou ſhalt
not ſhriue the for veyn glorye ne for ypocriſye/ne for no cauſe
but only for the doubte of Jheſu Criſt andy the hele of thy
ſoule / Thou ſhalt not eke reme to the preeſt al ſodenly to
telle hym lightly thy ſynne as who tellith a iape or a tale.
but auiſedly with grete deuocion andy general to ſhriue the
ofter than onys of ſynne whiche thou haſt be ſhriuen of / it
is the more merite / For as ſaith ſaint Auſtyn/thou ſhalt
haue the more lightly relece & grace of godi / bothe of ſynne
andy of payne/And certis onys a yere at the leſt weye/it
is lawful for to be houſelid. For ſothly ones a yere alle
thynges renouelyn.

Incipit tercia pars penitencie.

Now haue I tolde of veyry confeſſion that is the ſecondy
part of penitencie/The thirde part is ſatiſfaction/&
ſtondeth generally in almes dede & in bodely payne/Now bey
ther thre maner of almeſſe Contricion of herte where a mā
offrith hym ſelf to godi/Another is to haue pyte of defaute
of his neyghbours/The thirde is in yeuyngh of goody coun
ſeyl andy comfort bodely andy goſtly where mey haue nede

and namely in substaunce of mannys soody / And take kepe that a man hath nede of these thingis generally / he hath nede of soody of clothing and herbergh / he hath nede of charitable counceyllyng and visityng in prison / and maladye and sepulture of ded bodyes / And yf thou maist not visite the nedeful with thy persone / visite hym with thy message & thy yeftis / These ben the general almesses of werkis of charite of hem that haue temporel richesse or discrescion in counceyllyng / Of these werkis shalt thou here at the day of dome this almesse sholdest thou do of thy proper thingis and hastely and prively yf thou maist / But natheles yf thou maist not do it prively thou shalt not forbere to do almes though men see hit / so that it be not do for thank of the worldy / but only for to haue thanke of our lordy Jhesu Crist / For as witnesseth saynt Mathew / A cyte may not be hydy that is set vpon a mountayn / ne men light not a lantern and put hit vnder a bussh̄el / but setten it vpon a Candelstik to lighten the men in the hous / Right so shal your light / lighten before men that they mowe see your goody werkis and glorifye your fader that is in heuen / Now as for to speke of bodily peyne / it stont in prayers / in wakyng / In fastyng and in vertuouse techyng of orisons / ye shal vnderstande that orisons or prayers is for to saye / A pietoy loys of herte that is redressidy in gody and expressyng it by worde outwardy to remeue harmeful thyngis / and to haue thingis spirytuel and durable and somtyme temporel thingis / Of whiche orisons / in the orison of pater noster hath Jhesu Crist encloside moste thingis / Certis it is pryuylegidy of thre thingis in his dignyte / for whiche it is

more digne thay ony other prayer for that Jhesu Crist hym
self made it/ and it is short/ for it sholde be conne the more
lightely/ and for to withholde more esely in herte/ and helpe
hym self the ofter with thorison/ and for a may sholde be
the lesse wery to saye it/ and for a may may not excuse hym
to lerne it/ hit is so short and so esy/ and for it compre-
hendith in hym self alle goode prayers/. Thexposicyon of
of this holy prayer that is so excellent and so digne/ I be-
take to the maistres of thologye/ Saue thus muche wyl
I saye/ That whan thou prayest that gode sholde forgeue
the thy giltys as thou forgeuyst hem that haue agiltyd the
Be wel ware that thou be not out of charyte/ This holy
orison amenusith eke venyal synne/ And therfore it apper-
teyneth specially to penitence/ This prayer muste be treuly
saide in very feith/ and that men praye to gode ordinatly.
discretly. and deuoutly. Alleway a man shal put his wille
to be subiect to the wil of gode/ This oryson muste eke be
sayde with grete humblenes and ful pure and honestly.
and not to the anoysaunce of ony man or woman/ hit muste
eke be contynued with werkis of charite/ hit auayleth eke
ayenst the vices of the soule/ For as saith saint Jherome.
by fastyng be sauyd the vices of the flesh/ and by prayers
the vices of the soule/ After this thou shalt vnderstande that
bodely peyne stont in walking/ For Jhesu crist saith/ Wake ye
& praye ye that ye ne entre in to wicked temptacion/ ye shal
vnderstande that fastyng standeth in three thinges/ in for-
bering of bodily mete & drynke/ & in forbering of worldly
volptees/ & in forbering of dedely synne with al his migh
thou shalt vnderstande that gode ordeyned fastinge

And to fastyng appertayneth foure thynges/largnes to
youre folk/gladnes in herte spirytuel/not be angryd ne to
be anoyed ne to gruche for he fastith/And also resonable
houre for to ete by mesure/That is to saye that a man sholde
not ete in vntyme ne sitte the lenger at his table for he fas
tith/Theme shalt thou vnderstande that bodily peyne stan
deth in disciplyne or techyng by worde or by wrytyng/or
by ensample/Also in weryng of heir/or of stamyn/or of
ay habergeon on her naked flesh for cristis sake/& that suche
maner penaunces/ne make not thy herte bitter or angry ne
anoyed of thy self/For better is to caste away thyn heyr
than to caste awey the swetenes of our lord Jhesu Crist.
And therfore saith sayne Poule/Clothe you as they that
ben chosen of god in herte/of mysericorde.debonairte.suf
fraunce and suche maner of clothyng/in whiche Jhesu crist
is more apaid than in any heyr or habergeon/than is disci
plyne eke in knockyng of thy breste/in scourgyng with
verdis.in kneelyng.in tribulacions.in suffryng paciently
wrongis that be do to hym/and eke in pacient suffryng of
maladyes/or lesynges/of worldly catel/or wyf.or chylde.
or other frendis/Theme shalt thou vnderstande whiche
thynges disturbley penaunce/And this is in thre ma
ners that is drede/shame/and wanhope that is desperacion
And for to spekе of drede/for whiche he woneth he may suf
fre no penaunce/ther ayenst is remedye for to thynke that
bodely penaunce is but short atte regarde of helle/that is
cruel and so longe that it lastyth withouten ende./Now
ayenst shame that a man hath to shryue hym/Sholde a
man thynke by way of reson/that he hath not be ashamed

[illegible] thynge / Certis hym ought not to be ashamed
to do fore thynges and goode thyngis / And that is con-
fessyons / A may sholde thynke that gode Woot al his
thoughtis and his Werkis and to hym may no thynge be
hyde ne couerid / Mey sholde eke remembre hem of the shame
that is to come at the day of dome to hem / that be not pen-
tent in this present lif. For al the creaturis in heuene and
in erthe and in helle shul see apertely al that they hidey in
this Worlde / Mold for to spelke of hem that bey so necligent
and slolwe to shriue hem / it stondeth in tlwo maners / That
one is that he hopeth to liue longe / and forto purchace muche
riches for his delyte / And theme Wil he shriue hym as he
saith / he may as hym semeth tymely ynolh come to shrifte
Anothyr is the furquydrye that he hath in Cristes mercy.
And ayenst the first he shal thynke that our lyf is in no
sikernes / And eke that alle the riches of the Worlde is in
auenture & passyng as a shadolwe on a Wal / And as saith
seint Gregore That it appertayneth to the grete righteous-
nesse of gode / that neuer shal the peyne stynte of them that
neuer Wolde Withdraalwe hem fro synne her thankis but euer
contynuedy in synne / For that perpetuel Will to do synne.
shal they haue perpetuel peyne / Wanhope is in tlwo maners
The first Wanhope is in the mercy of gode / That other is
that they thynke that they may not longe perseuere in goode-
nes / The first Wanhope cometh of that he demeth that he hath
synned so gretly / so ofte / and so longe leyn in synne that he
shal not be sauedy / Certis ayenst p cursid Wanhope he sholde
thinke that the passion of Jhesu is more stronge to vnbynde
than synne is to bynde / And ayenst the seconde Wanhope

he ſhal thynke that as ofte as he ſalleth / he ſhal [illegible]
penytence / And̄y though he neuer ſo longe haue leyn [illegible]
The mercy of Criſt is alway redy to reſceyue hym to mercy
[illegible] Wanhope that he demyth that he ſholdy not longe
[illegible]n goodnes / he ſhal thynke that the febilnes of
the deuyl may no thing do but men wol ſuffre hym / And̄y
eke he ſhal haue ſtrengthe of god̄y and̄y of alle hely chirche
and̄y of the protectyon of aungellis yf hym liſt / Thenne
ſhulle men vnderſtonde What is the fruyt of penaunce / and̄y
after the Word̄y of Jheſu Criſt / it is endeles bliſſe of heuene
There ioye hath no contrariosite of Woo ne greuaunce / there
alle harmys be paſt of this preſent lyf / there as is ſikernes
fro the pynes of helle / there as is the bleſſid̄y compayne that
reioyſen euermore eueriche of others Joye / there as the bod̄y
of may that Whylom Was foulk and̄y derk is more clere than
the ſonne / there as Whylom the body Was ſeke and̄y freel.
feble and̄y mortal / Is nmortal and̄y ſo ſtronge and̄y ſo hool
that ther may no thing enpayre hit / there as neyther is hun
ger ne thriſt ne colde / but euery ſoule repleneſſhid̄y With the
ſight of the parfyght knowyng of the trynyte / This bleſ;
ſhid̄y regne may may purchace by pouert ſpirytuel / and̄y the
glorye by lowneſſe / the plente of Joye by hunger and̄y thriſt
And̄y the reſte by trauayll / and̄y the lyf by deth and̄y mor
tyfiacion of ſynne / To that lyf he vs bringe that bought
With his precyous blood̄y Amen.

Explicit Tractatus Galfridi Chaucer de
Penitencia vt dicitur pro fabula Pectoris.

[illegible] hym / that
[illegible] of Mony [illegible]th
[illegible] ther [illegible] thyng / t[illegible]se
hym / [illegible] also that they excuse it to the vnfa[illegible]ly
[illegible]. For our book saith / al that is Writen / is Writen
for our doctrine / And that is myn entent / Wherfore I beseke
you mekely for the mercy of god / that ye for me praye that
crist haue mercy on me & forgeue me my giltes / that is namely
of my translacions of Worldly vanytees / the Whiche I reuoke
in my retractions / as is the book of troylus / the book also of
fame / the book of the .xxv. ladies / the book of þ duchesse / the book
of seynt Valentynes day of the [illegible] of briddis / the tales
of Caunterbury / tho that sownyn into [illegible]synne / the book of the
lyon / and many other bokis / yf they were in my remembraūce
and many a songe & many a lasciuious laye that crist of his
grete mercy forgeue me the synne / But of the translacion of
Boece de cōsolacōne & other bookis as of legendis of saintis
and omelies / moralite / and deuocion / that thanke I of our
lorde Jhesu crist & his blessid moder & all the saintis of heuene
beseching hym that they from hensforth vnto my liuys ende
sende me grace to bewayle my giltis that it may stande vnto
the saluacion of my soule / & graunte me grace of Verrey repen-
tance / confession / and satisfaccion to doo in this present lif /
through the benigne grace of hym that is kynge of kyngis &
preest of alle preestis that bought vs With the precyous blood
of his herte / so that I may be one of hym at the day of doome
that shal be saued . Qui cū patre & sancto spū viuit et regnat
deus omnia secula seculoz Amen .

